

"SHOCKER": WES CRAVEN UNLEASHES A NEW TERROR!

DISPLAY UNTIL 10/11/94

HORRORFAN

PREVIEWS

James Cameron's
Undersea Adventure

THE ABYSS

Stay Awake!
Freddy's Back

ELM STREET 5

The New London
MARTIANS!!!

Grotesque
Experiments in
THE
IMMORTALIZER

Clive Barker's NIGHTBREED

Barker directs
David Cronenberg in
a monster epic

The mad scientist
always blames...
**THE
ASSISTANT**



LITTLE MONSTERS

Ered Savage reverts
the monster under his bed



BUG INVASION

These creepy crawlers
have invaded the silver screen



PLUS: THE CAREER OF BASIL RATHBONE • FX WRITING GREG NICOTERO
BLASTS THE MPAA • VETERAN MONSTER-MAKER JOHN BUECHLER
DIRECTS HIS OWN FUTURE • EXPANDED HOME VIDEO COVERAGE



Back to Thrill and Chill you!

SCREAMY!



SCARY!

TERRIFYING!



HORRIFIC!

WE'LL BE SCARING
YOU—IF YOU DARE
TO TAKE IT!

DRACULA

THE VAMPIRE BAT THAT LIVES ON HUMAN BLOOD

STARRING
BELA LUGOSI

IMITATED BUT NEVER DUPLICATED!

FROM OUT OF SPACE...
came hordes of
green monsters!!

EDWARD L. ALPHEUSON
PRESENTS

INVADERS FROM MARS

with **Color**



HELENA CARTER ARTHUR FRANZ JIMMY HUNT

MILTON CARMON MARGES NORMAN BLAKE

EDWARD L. ALPHEUSON • RALPH HANCOCKMAN 20



CHARLES GOODMAN
Publisher

ROBERT T. MANNING
Executive
Vice President

JOHN DAMERONIAN
Vice President
Advertising

ROCK KERR
Director of
Manufacturing

DAVID LUKERS
Creative Director

STEVEN SCHWARTZ
Contributor

BRUCE J. SCHWENGGED
Editor

W.B. COLLINS
Managing Editor

JOE NORMAN
Florence McCANN
Associate Editors

EVIE COLEMAN
DENNIS POWERS
West Coast Bureau

BILL GARDNER
East Coast Bureau

THOMAS ATHERTON
Art Director

RETA BLINDER
Design Consultant

LARRYING PENA
Assistant Art Director

BRUCE PERL
Photo Editor

MARY ELLEN MCGRAFF
Assistant Photo Editor

JOE TOLMAN
DENNIS FRIEDMAN
Production Managers

DANIEL FOLMER
Production Assistant

MARLENE MINGOLLO
BRUCE J. SCHWENGGED
Assistant Editor

BETTY MALANTA
Classification Assistant

MICHAEL GARRETT
Assistant Bookkeeper

LAILA LA PATE
Advertising Account
Manager

ALLISON SHAFER
Advertising Account
Executive

EDITORIAL & ADVERTISING
SALES OFFICES

CCC Publishing Group, Inc., 444 Seventh
Avenue, New York, New York 10014

(212) 647-7100

Reprinted by permission of CCC Publishing Group, Inc. All rights reserved. Printed in the U.S.A. CCC Publishing Group, Inc. is not responsible for the content or the quality of the products advertised. CCC Publishing Group, Inc. is not responsible for the quality or deliverability of the products advertised.

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

A magazine catering to youngsters and adults? Outrageous!

Different people have different opinions about a horror magazine. Some serious pages shock full of graphic photos showing a violent scene, while others think it will only cater to kids in looking to a lack of quality and/or sophistication. Can't there be another kind of magazine? What about one that is for horror fans, not just for being horror fans, as we're expected to? Well, that's what *Horror* is about—the fan who wants more—and I am most pleased that our readers, young ones and adults alike, have proved its content: the balance of old and new, and our handling of the material.

After our premiere issue, we took a close look at our readers' reactions and criticisms. Many of the upgrades and changes in the second issue reflect those comments. We want *HF* to be the fans' magazine—we listen to what you have to say. So keep those letters coming.

Covering the film industry is a tough and difficult task, but it gets downright bizarre when the forces behind such films as *The Abyss*, *Dead Hunters* and *Ministry of Evil* are considered about getting coverage in horror magazines. The filmmakers do not consider these works traditional horror films and they are (properly) concerned about public misconception. That's understandable, but here they have an



opportunity to use the magazine's pages and forum to discuss and enlighten the public and their fans about their films and views. *Horror* fans want not only to cover horror entertainment, but most importantly, to broaden its scope and cover all that is of interest to the reader—even if it is not traditional horror. *HF* can now be found on sale in many shops and will look more in addition to new releases. Thank you for your continuing support.

gently because the fans are interested in him and all his works.

New to *HF* is a small section on laser discs. I need not be convinced that laser is of superior quality and is the most satisfying way for the video guru to build a collection. With the consumer becoming increasingly quality-



conscious, you would think the laser industry would take itself more seriously. One has more of a chance of finding a laser than a store that has a laser machine hooked up for demonstration (like for Super VHS). Film fans' accessibility is a big part of breaking into the mainstream. The market should get tough on retailers! On the magazine front—video tape companies are glad to get publicity; they are very cooperative and responsive. I can't figure out why companies like Pioneer and JVC fail to respond to requests to give their products publicity. If you guys aren't gonna push it—the print media sure isn't.

On to other matters. Since *HF* first came out, we have been swamped with subscription requests. Well, hold on to your hats—we now offer one-year subscriptions—see coupon on page 58 in issue. For those who wish not to subscribe, *HF* can now be found on sale in many shops and will look more in addition to new releases. Thank you for your continuing support.

Sincerely,
Bruce J. Schwenged
Bruce J. Schwenged
Editor

Letters To The Editor

Readers respond to *Horrorfan*

Life Long Friend

Thank you for two great issues! *MF#2* was the best. I can't thank you enough for your interview with Fred Olen Ray. I think he's the best filmmaker going today for one thing he has talent in his films, not the regular average populating masses of the film. You're win me over for life with that story.

Are you ever going to do an interview with gorgeous Debbie Brown? She's working on a new horror film called *The Black Room*. In a recent letter to me she sounded very excited about it. An article on her is long overdue.

Well, keep up the great work, and don't fret too much about the lack over Linnea Quigley's topless photo in *RPF#1*. Most people don't know a good thing when they see it.

Kevin Coon
Livingston, NJ

Thanks for your lots of confidence concerning Linnea. But I'm sure you meant, "most people don't know good things when they see them."



Blind Justice

You did it again! Great second issue! There is a slight correction on the article "Blind Life," however: the movie *Murder Of The Screamers* is not available from Super Video anymore, but from Val American video just picked up the rights to it! Super Video went out of business three-and-a-half years ago—so most video stores do not have the film. Plus I need to mention that the second (out of four) of the *Blind Dead* movies is also available for the first Linnea video (though it was never released theatrically, with its original title, *Murder Of The Evil Dead*, from Bravo Video label, so no?)

By all means keep reviewing foreign horror films and keep up the overall good work!

Oh, yeah! the photo shown with *Murder Of The Screamers* is not from the film, but from the first *Blind Dead* film, *Tomb Of The Blind Dead*.

George Latsopoulos
Seattle, WA.

Bronx Cheer

I'm glad to be able to say that issue #2 is just as good as #1. I like your diverse coverage of both old and new, big and low budget horror, and your emphasis on films not covered in other magazines.



There is one issue I must address, though you mentioned the "Bash" you received over showing Linnea Quigley's breasts in *RPF#1*. I, for one, like seeing bare breasts! I especially like seeing Linnea Quigley's breasts! I don't feel this was at all out of hand, considering the fact that in all low budget horror nudity is de rigueur.

Please don't worry out and submit to pressure by a small group of prigs! Keep showing all the horror films you can, clothes or no-clothes!

There are the words of a 35 year old, life-long horror fan. Here's to horror, to film and to fan—because that's what it's ultimately all about. And here's to freedom, for which this publication is named, for without we fans there would be no reason to make the film.

Jerry R. Greenberg
Bronx, NY

You're right! But some little disapproving squeaked owner may not want to display a horror mag that shows a woman's top.

More Screamers

Horrorfan's debut issue, I must admit, did not offer anything new. Al though it was an enjoyable read, there was really not one article or feature

that stood out. However, *Horrorfan #2* was quite refreshing. The Gunnar Hansen feature was different, informative and exciting, as were the reviews on *Horror Show*, *Fred Olen Ray*, and *Robert Jay*.

The one thing that will put *Horrorfan* deeper into the horror fan genre is simple: have more articles like the one on "Cinema Greenbacks." This was the best article I've read in any horror magazine since *Fantastic Monsters* classic "Road of the Gods" issue! That is originality. Sure, it had been discussed in other magazines and in John Waters's *Creeple* books, but *Horrorfan* picked the sub and went to the core! *Fantastic* article. Similar articles and/or features will keep your reader ship from declining. The only other gripe I have is how you seem to pay too much attention to the big budget epics. Low budget classics are a plenty! Please review some! Also, the Jack Arnold feature was incredible! *Horrorfan* may be around for some time!

Nick C. Barronette
Staten Island, NY

What do you mean you didn't find anything new in *RPF#1*? What about my picture on page three? As for #2, big budget epics provide lots of nice color and everyone wants color.

True Freddy Fan

Congratulations on your second issue of *Horrorfan*. It was the best issue of any horror magazine that year I'm glad to see you're concentrating on more than just special effects, and I applaud your decision to do away with the gimmicky patterns.

The Fred Olen Ray interview was fantastic. Who would expect such a fascinating discussion from such an unlikely source? Certainly not *Requiem*, which recently blasted Ray in its letter page.

The only thing that could improve your fine mag now would be to increase the frequency of its publication.

Mark Citrona
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Our rag will be on sale every three months and four people liked our poster.

Horrorfan welcomes reader correspondence. Please address your letters to: *Horrorfan*, Letters To The Editor, GCR Publishing, 888 Seventh Avenue, New York, NY 10108. All correspondence is typed. I appreciate the readers reading and appreciating their letter and answer. Remember to accompany any queries or requests with a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

HORRORFAN

VOLUME 1 NO. 3
Fall 1993

DEPARTMENTS

6 WATCH THE SKIES

Scary movie picks of future flight ideas.

26 GUEST COLUMNIST: GREG NICOTERO

FZ and tales on the 1970s.

28 VIDEO SLEEPER: ENEMY FROM SPACE

An overlooked classic from the Golden Age of sci-fi.

48 SHELF LIFE

Picks and pans for the discriminating video viewer.



PREVIEWS



14 SHOCKER

Wes Craven introduces Horror Fester, a killer to rival horror's resident

24 THE ABYSS

Jeanne Garmron (Alicia) goes underwater in a big-budget action-thriller

30 NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET 5

Freddy Krueger is back—ready to lay with a vengeance



32 NIGHTBREED

A last city of the dead is explored in Clive Barker's latest

36 LITTLE MONSTERS

The crewmen under the bed make it in the big screen.

44 THE IMMORTALIZER

Eternal souls in the promising premise of this gruesome black comedy

56 MARTIANS!!!

Bumbling aliens are the subject of a 'War of the Worlds' take-off

FEATURES

10 RETROSPECTIVE: INVASION OF THE BUGS

Paul Cio: Giant insects and mutant spiders take over

18 RETROSPECTIVE: THE ASSISTANT

The mad scientist's subplot in a classic horror staple

38 RETROSPECTIVE: BASIL RATHBONE

Famous for his Sherlock Holmes, the actor has been featured in many genre films



53 INTERVIEW: DAVE DECOTEAU

A talk with the new master of low-budget darks and chills



62 PROFILE: JOHN CARL BUECHLER

FZ's main entertainment leader beyond Fleish, Jason and Michael Meyers.

WATCH the SKIES

Films from other galaxies are landing at a theater near you

NIGHT ANGEL

Lilith (Ice Anderson) is the incredibly gorgeous lead character of Paragon Arts International's latest release, *Night Angel*. She's perfect, every man's fantasy come true—that is, if her fantasy is an ancient she-demon from Hell. Her true nature is betrayed only by her deformed right hand: a three-fingered claw.

Lilith originally appeared in the Old Times comic, cast out of the Gar Den of Eden because of her pride. In the words of Director Dominique Olszewski (Oliver After Darkcase), the new movie "brings together ancient myth and modern voices. Seeing these two voices clash is very exciting for a filmmaker."

The modern version has Lilith attacking the staff of a fashion magazine, seducing and murdering to become its covergirl. (The new Black is an early victim.) She plans to use her



claw, which has hypnotic properties, to seduce rapist modelled Fort. Lilith, one of the magazine's staff (London Ashby and Debra Feuer) are onto her monstrous scheme and are determined to stop her. Executive producer Walter Foster, whose first film for Paragon was

Mustard, named Steve Johnson and KNO (aka Karmann Howard Banger Greg Watson) is handling the effects—which include a Hellish Black and a full blown demon transformation. With all this going for her, Lilith doesn't seem like the kind of girl you'd want to bring home to mother.

heinous disfigurement. Eric watches Melody as security monitors, tormented by his obsessive love for her, tormented by his dejected quest for vengeance against the mall.

Eventually, Melody awakens in a bizarre interdimensional chamber where all she can hear of war is the Phantom (Eric) using weights. The shock of Eric's disfigurement fades against the tender remembrance of their past love—until she learns he intends for her to leave their old world.



now of eternal together now, if not in life. Then in death—and that he has planted a bomb in the mall, a bomb which is set and ticking.

PHANTOM OF THE MALL

The next time electronic musicists "I'm going to the mall," take heed! Pull yourself away from the tube—or whatever—and stop him! A groovy disfigured man is haunting the modern institution, and he likes going out on dates—there's killing, not shopping.

Price Entertainment presents a new twist to one of the many Phantom movies scheduled to scare this summer's moviegoers. In this version, directed by Richard Friedman,

page homage to the classic while adding some 80s camp style of its own. Eric Matthews (Derek



Myrdall) is left for dead when his house is burned to the ground by a sinister urban developer so a new mall can be built. One year later, his girlfriend Melody (Kari Whitman), who narrowly escaped the fire, now waitress in the shopping haven. But only she begins to see and hear things that remind her of Eric. It becomes obvious that after surviving the fire, Eric is back, seeking revenge on everyone responsible for his grotesque scars. From his underground lair, he sends the mall ticking his

COMMUNION

Author William Whitley Strieber's *Communion*, Walker International best-seller *Communion* has recently been adapted into a feature film by Strieber and directed by Philippe Mora (The Howling II & III). Briefly, Strieber claims that he and his family were abducted by intelligent non-human visitors. Christopher Walken plays Whitley in the film with Lindsay Crouse as his wife, Anne.

Mora's relationship with Strieber dates back to the late 60s when both were living in London. Mora was painting while Strieber was studying at the London School of Film. Twenty years later, they've formed a production company that was set up to bring *Communion* to the screen.

"This is not a science-fiction film. Instead it's what I call a science-fiction film," explained Mora. "It's worth noting that *Communion* will not be what we call a special-effects type picture. The movie plays very well as more of a psychological thriller. It's really about a family under pressure."

Mora adds that he's delighted with Walken's (who won an Oscar for The Deer Hunter) participation. "His presence brings a touch of class to the production. When we screened *Communion* at the American Film Market, an early trade review said that Walken's performance in the film is a career highlight."

According to Mora, curious filmgoers can expect to see *Communion* in theaters by September.

PSYCHOCOP

"To serve and protect" is the motto of the LAPD. "Black right" is the standard response from anybody who has actually ever called them for last help. For these are strange times, where we

find police dispatchers hanging up on hysterical homeowners as though are breaking down their back doors, and set-ups by a system within a system.



Within the system, designed to sting exposed or unbalanced officers of the law. All front page stuff, and *Psychocop* takes this sad reality to the logical extreme in the horror movie mold, proving you own's trust anybody. Certainly not this police thing from Hell anyway, who intends to make the lives and deaths of several

SanDiego teenagers on school vacation pretty awful—all because they picked up the telephone and dialed "911."

This is the basis for a thriller most would not like to have happen to them too far away, really, have no jolt in a booky mask, written and directed by Wallace Forno in his first go-round at helming an independent feature, produced by Jessica Haines (Darkroom, Columbo's Blooded), and the soon to be-released Double State horror video Double Vision. Both prove that nothing beats real-life for sheer terror.

SOMETHING IS WAITING

In the year 2021, the US spaceship *Spacecore 1*, en route to the solar system of Centaurus B-42, and daily experiences a mysterious loss of power. Left with only auxiliary power, the crew of the ship is in dire need of help. Then the frightful happens. *Discovery 18*, an

old, fifth-century space shuttle—as out of date as the crew of *Spacecore 1* as a Spanish galleon would be to that of an aircraft carrier—drifts into view.

Making the best of a bad situation, the crew docks and prepares to re-power the ship and continue the voyage. After a crew member is brutally slain, the others discover *Discovery* a terrible secret. The ship had been reported lost in a "terrestrial triangle" of outer space, a quadrant of the celestial and somewhere *Spacecore 1* has stumbled onto the same night pattern.

Something is Waiting is a taste to space-age that features an ennobler with ultimate end among the stars. The film stars Allan Macdonald, Joe Turkel (best known as the creator of the replicants in *Blade Runner*) and the ghostly bartender in *The Shining*, Robert Sampson (He-Animator) and John Dahl. Put together by Keith Walley and Dean Kaminer, the producers of The *Da* *Harmon*, a modest European horror film, *Some*

FANTASTIC FILMSHOW

In the middle of the desert the uprooted and misplaced, the Empire State-Chrysler and Pan Am buildings among others—have been stripped of these towering structures by the same giant, metallic beast that suddenly now towers above slouching yet another



skyscraper in its powerful jaws. Eyed like a tentacle like a beak-like pitcher on the ground, terrifyingly hurls the concrete mass to the ground, terrifyingly missing the prey, a seemingly powerless human crawling for his life across the hot desert sand.

Such is the premise of *Nightmare*, a piece of animated surrealism by Mark Sullivan (whose of films work has appeared in *Kobayashi* and *Heavenly* (see II) one of seven very bizarre shorts collectively entitled *Fantastic Filmshow*. Sullivan's and the other six—which range from "Final Hour" by Larry Simmons to "A Christmas Treat" by Tim Sullivan—are enthralling, stop motion and optical effects to provide a perfectly scripted measure of sci-fi, fantasy and horror.

Fantastic Filmshow is produced and compiled by Ted A. Scharf and Joe Williams, and will be shown and up back *Discovery 18*.





show was directed by D & Webster.

Walley and Rammer turned to effects artist Chris Rugg (who also worked on *The Hurricane* and for the gruesome transformations and gore effects required by the story. Rugg has worked for everyone from John Badham and Roger Corman to Fred Olen Ray before coming up his own effects studio, his work having appeared in such films as *A Nightmare on Elm Street Part 4* and *Orisere II*.

"It turns out it's the Devil (whom the crew members encounter)," exclaims Rugg. "They're taken into a Devil's Triangle in space and the Devil is going through and killing each one of them off. It's sort of like *The Thing* in space mode. The *Star* said: Every time [he is] about to take them over something from their past comes up and confronts them, giving the scenes psychological aspects. The scenes the way they are filmed, are very intense."

"It's really twisted," Rugg concludes. "The story went from being just a good, straight horror film to being psychologically much scarier. All the scenes are so intense, and so psychologically brutal that I feel quite sorry for the audience. They're going to be wiped out by the time the movie is over. It's hard to tell, but as we're shooting it, it looks great."

THE MALEDICTION

What a demon—in the form of a beautiful, shapely female assassin—and a street-tough ex cop slash, there's gonna be trouble starting out as a straight action/adventure film, Bert I. Gordon's *The Malediction* turns into something else entirely. *MP* recently spoke briefly to Gordon about his new project.

MP: Is *The Malediction* significantly different from the spate of slasher films?

BIG: It isn't a story about a monster on a rampage throughout a city. Nothing like that at all. The deaths are not "slasher." This creature—it's a "she," actually—is not seen throughout the film. She's in human form until the very end. The character development is very unusual. You care for these people. The detective (Richard Roundtree) had been wounded, retired at a young age, and has a repressed son. It's not a horror film, that's what I'm trying to say. *Orisere II* has elements of horror.

MP: Your past films, including *Tormented* (1963), *Neurosis* (1971), and *The Counting* (1980), involved the paranormal. Did you prefer



working on genre films that contain a super natural motif over science fiction?

BIG: I'm not drawn to "hardware" science fiction—spaceships, outer space and so on. The supernatural seems to lend itself more to dealing with the psyche or with people, so that's why I'm drawn to that. It isn't a comfortable situation.

MP: *The Malediction* seems to stress sexuality without resorting to the "sex begets violence" syndrome. How would you describe your personal application of eroticism in the movie?

BIG: The "evil one" is a beautiful woman. She is not what she seems to be. She seems to be a seductress, (she's actually) a hedonistic creature who's hung off earth for 500

years. She's without any restriction (and) goes for any pleasures of death, sex, anything that's open to her. And she's driven by a supernatural force, in a search that's brought out in the story. That's what draws her together with *Forer*.

MP: When is *The Malediction* scheduled for release?

BIG: The print is still wet. I would guess it would be in the Fall. I've seen it a thousand times. Just as I have all of my films when I make them, and I love this one.

MP: Which qualities of *The Malediction* script are personally appealing to you?

BIG: That the people were people. You really care about these people. The characterizations were very well developed and beautifully defined. Each one has a life of his or her own, they're not cardboard figures swirling around a gimmick. So many of your science fiction or horror films start out with the gimmick. "Oh, I think I'll make a film about whales and, oh yes, we have to have a man, we have to have a girl, and let's put a few teenagers in it and give them some nothing dialogue." But this starts, in the very beginning, with a wonderful development of people that you really care about. It's a good story (even) without the supernatural element. It's an action suspense thriller.



—Bill George

Producer
David Kirschner:
More Child's Play

After collaborating with Steven Spielberg on the highly acclaimed animated feature *An American Tail*, producer David Kirschner set his sights on his own movie and his home run with *Child's Play*.

"When I wanted to make *Child's Play*, everybody said, 'You're crazy,'" recalled Kirschner. They reminded me that Freddy's out there and Jason's out there. We really don't need a killer doll. Well, I didn't buy that. If it's an inventive, quality film, it'll attract an audience."

According to Kirschner, *Child's Play*—made on a modest \$6 million budget—has so far grossed close to \$40 million. Naturally, a sequel is in the works.



"Don Mancini created *Child's Play*. Then John Lahti did a very good first draft," explained Kirschner. "After that, director Tom Holland did some work on it and added a few scenes. I told [all] you that Don Mancini is writing the sequel and it'll be directed by John Lahti. Catherine Hicks and the little boy, Alex Vincent, will star again. Hopefully, we'll start shooting soon."

The producer didn't want to reveal plot details or even the basic story line. "It ain't won't be like Freddy Krueger," he said. "We really want to go back to Hitchcock-type

filmmaking. We always have to keep in mind that *Child's* is a puppet. We don't want the audience to ever get bored with him. He'll also appear on screen much more in the second film. That's for sure."

—Louis Lomax

BLOODY MADONNA

No, *Bloody Madonna* doesn't star Sean. First Produced by Fredriksson, Grimes and Despres. *Bloody Madonna* is a wicked gore fest—combining religious symbolism and Hitchcock-like tension with a killer who makes Ted Bundy look like Captain Nice. The film is directed by native Montecarlo (now living in Los Angeles) Tony Roman—an ex-cooker who has kicked out the jabs with the likes of *Chris Spider* and *Melody Cruise*. "I'd describe the style of *Bloody Madonna* as 'pop horror,'" Roman said.

Pop horror?

"I want to get the feeling of real people, real society. The characters listen to the music that people listen to, they talk the way kids talk. They're not just corpses waiting to be killed. It's not a period piece, it's now."

The story starts in the downtown streets, where a peeping Tom gets his kicks staring into a young woman's bromeliads window. A screen comes from outside, and at moments later, the woman's body slowly slips down the window, fingerlessly snapping desperately at the glass. When the cops come, they discover that her face has been marked with the spoked sign of a Madonna, the kind of sign that Catholic schoolkids often wear. This woman is only the first victim of a bloody edge of terror. The killer, Matthew (Gaston Cusack)—with his Virgin Mary fetish—commits murder after murder in

the Holy Mother's name, conducting his own personal Inquisition.

Director Roman was especially happy with the performance of young actress Claire Dine, whom he calls "the next Holly Ringwald. Claire was calm, prepared, knew all her lines, she was perfect. This was her first feature but you'd think she'd been doing it for years. A star is born!"

Bloody Madonna is gritty, street smart and skin-crawling. With Matthew on the loose, it just might make you think twice before you say your prayers.

.....
PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

The newest incarnation of the Phantom (there have been three previous film versions in addition to the current Broadway musical) is set for August release, starring Robert Englund (yep, Freddy Krueger of the *Nightmare* series) and Jill Schoelen (The *Stepfather*) as his obsessive love interest.

Director Dwight Little (*Madhouse 4*) and scriptwriter Duke Sandifer (*Ghost Town*) based the story on the 19th-century Gaston Leroux novel, but chose a more travel twist to include modern day settings. The result will be a movie completely different from any previous Phantom.

Robert Englund committed on the new Phantom movie. "I think it's going to be great and different—our Phantom is 'bookended' by a girl as opposed to [defined in the 1960s]. Then we go back in time via his dreams: his unconsciousness scene, using the plot of *Phantom of the Opera* to warn her that the Phantom is still alive and in tact in the 1960s."

"It's like a Hammer film," Englund said of the visual style. "That was definite. We switched 1930s Paris to England,

so it really is a state-of-the-art update of the old Hammer horror films. Thinking that probably there are a couple generations who have missed that Hammer look—high and sensual colors. We have our Grand Guignol books, but it has that 1930s British look that I think of as opic. It's sort of *Phantom* made Jack the Ripper in tact, which is very much Hammer material, and that forms the basis of our introduction to a hooded bird (scopas) who follows the Ripper clues that lead him into the Opera."

"Kevin Kauger, our make-up man, constantly had to top himself. In fact, the elaborate stages of make-up are to be shot here in Hollywood—from the first, sort of minimalist scene where the Phantom uses what's lying around the opera dressing rooms to hide his disfigurement, to where he places himself together from victims and audience. And you get to see the up Robert."

THE SLEEPING CAR

Starring his 16-year-old son, Sean, Sean's quite his job, leaves his wife and decides to go back to college. Slow in town, he picks out half an old, abandoned railroad car. Of course, it's not any old railroad car. It's *The Sleeping Car*, and it's haunted by the vengeful spirit of the landlady's husband, known as The Master, who is played by FE wizard John Carl Buncher.

Produced and directed by Douglas Curtis (co-producer of *The Philadelphia Experiment*), this Vidmark production is slated for a fall \$9 release. *The Sleeping Car* features David Naughton (*American Werewolf in London*) as Jason, along with Jeff Conaway (*TV's Taxi*) and veteran actor Karin McDermott as a white madwoman who lives in the other half of the railroad car.

Invasion of the BUGS

From tiny ants to a behemoth tarantula, creepy crawlers of all sizes have invaded the silver screen. Giant insects and huge spiders wreak havoc in the first of a two-part retrospective

By W.B. Gerard



A giant and hairy arachnid appearance in *TITANIC*

Man and insect have been on bad terms since day one. They infect our food and compete for living space. Spiders, viciously predatory and potentially venomous, don't exactly inspire affection, either.

Often collectively referred to as "bugs," these creepy-crawlers are a fact of life. Mile-long clouds of hungry locusts epitomize the vagaries of insects that regularly descend on man's food crop. Cockroaches and ants invade

homes, and in some areas it's good to keep an eye open for scorpions, black widows and even tarantulas.

Given the range of fear and disgust that bugs inspire up, it's not surprising to see them playing everything from bit parts to starring roles in horror films. Their naturally brutal nature and teeming numbers make them ideal horror bogymen, and the emotional reasons they evoke from most people sure don't hurt.

When Reedfield, DeWolfe's massive sidekick, champs down flies and spiders in *Itchy Scorpions*, attempts, it strikes a visceral blow to the audience, both native and not so very gruesome. Bugs strike fear in another man, not entirely in *The Silence and the Darkness III*, where they appear as byproducts of heinous evil magic, either by pouring out of facial growths or swarming with worms as cursed ruler bar masks.

But the deepest chord of fear is struck when bugs go on the warpath. Organized, ruthless and voracious, some can be dangerous to man even in their natural form. *The Naked Jungle* features Charlton Heston trying to save Eleanor Parker and his plantation from marauding army ants in Africa. Byron Haskin (*The War of the Worlds*, *From North to South*) as stranger to the fantasia, directed the adaptation of Carl Stephenson's short story "Laurance vs. the Ants." The tiny horrors—which are a real-life threat in many parts of Africa—eat alive everything in their path: trees, animals and even men.

The book and semi-documentary film, *The Hellgram Goliath* (1971) takes this concept one step further by predicting eventual world domination by insects. A fictitious alien on the post-lecture-style, showing footage of bugs' voraciousness and adaptability. Anybody who's experienced the persistence of ants at a picnic or dealt with a roach infestation can attest to the theory's frightening validity.

Except for some phobias, though, people feel unthreatened by bugs. The subtle lack of sex and intelligence usually only rate them as nuisances rarely worth the effort of a hunt. One solution movie-makers have used to make up for this lack of threat is to make those rky insects and spiders enormous and loose them on the unsuspecting world. Witness the terrifying scene in *The Incredible Shrinking Man* (1957) when an average sized guy attacks the tiny little character, who's forced to fight the beast off with the aid of weapons. The spider, which isn't nearly as scary as it looks, is suddenly an all-out unstoppable blood-thirsty monster worthy of a cold-weather nightmare.

THWIM is the venerable great grand-est of all bug-bug films. Filmed and set in black-and-white 1954 when the



The bugs' naturally brutal nature makes them ideal horror heavies

atomic age wasn't all maturing, the film must have been fairly believable. After all, new potential for the all-powerful atom was heralded every day; shouldn't that miracle have a *doomsday*, too?

The 15-foot-long ants, a result of A bomb tests, had been largely keeping to *THWIM* lives in the New Mexico desert when a police sergeant (James Whitmore) and his partner find a dead little girl wandering in the wilderness clutching a stuffed animal. Later, they come upon the soon-to-be-typical suspicious car wreck. The *Feds* move in quickly (after all, the girl's dad, Eddie, father was an FBI man) and soon the Army's dropping gas bombs on the bugs' beloved nest accompanied by a dramatic symphony score. One queen antelope is shot's new nest in the cozy sewers of Los Angeles, but it's nothing that some vintage firepower can't remedy.

The age-old story of man versus nature is given a *Sole on It* slant that's since become classic: men are heroes, women wait outside and the nation gets wiped off the face of the Earth that maybe not... David Sherwood's screenplay, while dealing with a new

and scientific subject, uses very traditional techniques, like threatening kids, to elicit emotion.

THWIM is undoubtedly one of the most genuinely frightening bug films. It nervously brings up the atomic question by showing some almost-credible disadvantages of the Bomb. The film does this so straight-faced a real matter-of-factly that it's hard not to fall under its spell. The remote setting seems to exist only temporarily in the first place, subject to the whims of the constantly shifting sands. The characters are entirely sincere. James Whitmore is particularly believable, often under incredible circumstances, and when a mother parted from her son cries in fear she's not thinking about model ants.

Significantly, the ants themselves are a real threat: enormous. They are as real as any giant ants could be, briefly equating with snapping mandibles. Their realism is cleverly boosted by shooting the models in dim light, wind-swept and smoke-filled chambers. The viewer's imagination fills in what is obscured or unseen, resulting in credible giant ants.



Professor Brenda May G. Carroll shows giant insects to children in *Requiem of the Beast*

The suits in *THEM* are represented effectively with occasionally obscured shots of expensive models, but their depiction brings up an interesting point pertinent to all bug films. Basically, effects men have two terrible choices: use model bugs, which are at their best, believable and at worst hilarious, or use the real things, which are difficult to handle and generally hard to get to look very threatening in general. The realism of the insects is crucial to believing the entire premise of a movie.

Tarantula swept along in 1955 starring a bigger and potentially more dangerous bug. The trouble begins when Dr. Marc Hastings (John Agar) and Sheriff Jack Andrews (Nathan Furrer) investigate a strangely deformed corpse found in the desert, nearby Hastings diagnoses the cause of death as ascaridiasis—an accelerated growth due to a hormonal disorder. When the body is identified as a researcher who had been working in an isolated lab, the pieces of the puzzle begin to fall in place.

Apparently, Professor Gerald Beemer (Leo G. Carroll) has developed an atomic growth nutrient in his lab with the intention of producing giant animals for mankind. Huge guinea pigs, mice and—of course—a tarantula inhabit the lab's cages. In typical mid-century fashion, though, Beemer has rejected his two fellow researchers with the staff for no apparent reason. One died after twinking while the other, also deformed, manages to escape the not-so-good Professor and destroy the lab. All heck breaks loose, as does the, uh, little character, who proceeds to do what any self-respecting giant spider



would strip several humans in the scene, destroy a few cars and generally lower real estate values. The more outrageous incident is finally handled with no pain by the Air Force on the outskirts of a desert town, ending its sometimes ambivalent spree.

Sadly, the story's intriguing premise of manly arid green war is a waste

in what's going to kill it. There's no such danger of the phenomenon actually spreading like the flying queen in *THEM*, and the area is so remote (wide open plains and empty high ways) that the improbable destruction of the town wouldn't even be noticed by the outside world for a while.

Director Jack Arnold (*The Inevitable Shrinking Man*, The Creature from the Black Lagoon) was inspired to rewrite the script by the "size and ominous appearance" of the tarantulas near his California home (for more on Jack Arnold, see *HP #8*). He portrays the hairy giant beast using matte work with a real tarantula. Unfortunately, the spider's consistency of size varies from scene to scene. Though primitive, the effects are occasionally impressive (like when the bug bugs down over a road), but to the eye accustomed to the advanced special effects of today, the scene does a little too often.

Matte photography and even crude effects are used in *Beginning of the End* (1957), when giant locusts mow Chicago. Screened Ed Woodward (Peter Graves) has been using atomic stimulation to grow huge veggies in his Department of Agriculture lab in southern Illinois. Surprisingly, he hasn't been too neat about it, either: some grasshoppers got a dose as well. These greatly-enlarged locusts eventually work their way north, destroying towns and wheat. Insecticides and bombs don't stop them. Chicago is evacuated, and the Army is called in (the military must have seen the test earlier film). Woodward, who figured out the atomic connection?!, has concocted a plan to lure the bugs to the water using their own call. They're lured to Lake Michigan using loud speakers and drawn unconsciously

Mothra would be the last giant bug film to hit the screen for nearly 15 years.

blow the bigger away sometimes. Most of the film is given to finding and destroying the awesome arachnid, which becomes elementary after a point, the only question that remains

A composite shot showing *Mothra* in the midst of its quest.



accompanied by the soundtrack—becoming creature.

Worth noting is the preciously camp opening scene, where a 50s teenage couple are attacked in a convertible by an unseen foe, backed by a thunderous and unforgettably groovy rock soundtrack. (This is shortly followed by the now-familiar cops find the ravaged car scene.) Also interesting is a sequence where a voyeuristic giant bug, crawling up a building, peeks in the window to find—surprise—a screaming young lady inside. ("If only I were King," it must be thinking.)

The script, by Fred Freidberger and Lester Gore, is a little far-fetched, but is played straight forwardly by the now stock cast of amateur, military men and a girlfriend. Unfortunately the premise and the FX (grasshoppers scaling the photo of a building) don't hold up as well, resulting in an unbelievable movie. The film is redeemed somewhat by its scale in major city is credited, which adds some much-



needed realism by way of locale. In addition, the man-versus-nature theme is nicely underlined by the location's reputation of had intended for human chronically, the bugs were acquired in Texas during a plague there! Producer/writer FX man Bert I. Gordon (who went on to make *Empire of the Ants* 20 years later) leads a pseudo-documentary style in an effort to maintain believability. In a recent interview, Gordon commented on the big-bug genre: "At that particular time, I felt it was interesting and fascinating. There was a real possibility of something like that happening."

The same year brought a series of giant-insect films with an anything-goes attitude: *The Deadly Manx* (1963) stars a prehistoric jeeper who's loosed from an iceberg to do the usual big-city havoc wreaking, New York and Washington being primary targets. Using a couple of a normal manna, director William Alland borrows heavily from *The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms* (1955) for style and substance, but to much less effect.

Wasps are the menace in *The Monster From Green Hell* (1957), and atomic radiation is again the reason for their incredible growth. The bugs in this formula film are sent into space for experimental purposes, only to crash in an African jungle and get exposed to the rocket's radioactive fuel. Directed by Kenneth Crane and produced by Al Zeman, this film barely gets off the ground with bad FX and miles of stock footage.

Large scorpions are released after a volcanic eruption in Mexico in *The Blood Scorpion* (1957) and wreak predictable havoc. The prehistoric pests are depicted with some interesting stop-motion photography courtesy of Willis O'Brien (who also did *King Kong*), but director Edward Ludwig and writers David Duceau and Robert Hesse are affected by a common 50s ailment—formula via Steve Richard Deming and Merv Corley scramble around Mexico to try to avoid the bugs; yet, they might have been better off avoiding the script.

Appearing a year later, *The Spider* (1958) stars a screaming eight-legged cannibal living outside a small town that is chock full of curious teenagers. Bert I. Gordon directed and produced this low-budget teen terror film.

The deepest chord of fear is struck when the bugs go on the warpath.

which stars Ed Kemmer in the 50s TV show *Space Patrol*. The whole thing was probably a lot easier when it was sitting in a convertible at a drive-in.

No big bug had would be complete without mention of *Mothra* (1962), the last giant insect to hit the screen for nearly 12 years. Imported from Japan and done in a style similar to Godzilla



a decade earlier, *Mothra* might be described as a relatively benign character—at least as far as giant insects are concerned.

The title character, a 300-foot-long caterpillar, is a god to primitive South Pacific Islanders. The natives have had enough problems with atomic testing nearby, so when a professor smashes the *Peacocks*, a pair of foot-high women, it's the last straw. The islanders evoke *Mothra* with the usual song and dance, and the leviathan, here, seems to go to Tokyo to retrieve the little ladies, who are being shined to HBO audiences as a curiosity. Along the way, the bug makes a slaughter and destroys a dam, but not with muching make. It's just out to get his girls.

It and artwork page 70



Shocker

Wes Craven introduces Horace Pinker,
a killer to rival horror's nastiest

By Kyle Counts

Move over, Freddy Krueger. There's a new villain coming to town. His name: Horace Pinker. The movie: Wes Craven's *Shocker*, due this fall from Universal.

If Horace Pinker sounds

more like a mild-mannered librarian than a bloodthirsty killing machine, consider his credentials: a mass murderer who kills for pleasure, he learns how to harness the power of electricity inside to transform



Pinker (Michael Rooker), before his conversion, conducts an unlikely ritual that leaves him permanently charged



Jonathan (Peter Dinklage) and Verbal (Michael Murphy) find Alana dead



Alana (Carol Cooper) returns from the dead.



Jonathan tries to convince Seagal that Pinker has assumed the electric chair.

himself into a supercharged monster capable of possessing people's bodies at will. He then discovers a methodology which he can transport himself into people's television sets and step out into their living rooms—a most convenient way to indulge his fiendish appetite for slaughter. And, unlike one-note Freddy, Pinker grows more formidable as the film progresses.

Slasher is the first product of Craven's four picture deal with Alive Films, the company that has a similar arrangement with John Carpenter. Craven's agreement calls for him to deliver two genre films, with the option of two more pictures of whatever variety he chooses. Alive co-president (with Andre Blay) Skip Gordon has guaranteed Craven complete creative control, including casting and final cut—more to the ease of Craven, who, like fellow horrormeister Carpenter, has had his share of problems in dealing with the major studios.

"It's the same as being the captain of a ship: if you have the captain, or eight captains, you're going to hit an iceberg and go down," said Craven, clean-shaven these days and wearing a black suit. *Twilight Zone* poster. "It's very difficult to do the kinds of films I do, which have a very peculiar vision, and to have to contend with studio executives constantly saying, 'Why don't we do it this way?' On this show I don't have to show credits to anybody, or get casting or script approval from anybody—it's extraordinary. I'm loath to talk about it because I don't want to draw too much attention to it. *Slasher* will probably be the most *Wes Craven* film I've ever made."

One might anticipate, then, that the film will be visually intense and not for the squeamish, but in revealing



the plot, Craven sees *Slasher* in more cerebral terms. "It's a story about conscience and taking responsibility for one's fate. The hero, Jonathan, is a college football star who's a leader, mumpfoff and apathetic to a fault. One day he lets his head on the goal post during training and is sent home to recuperate. It's the last time he's on earth about anything.

"He's a foster child, and on the way home he passes his old foster home. Suddenly the screen goes dark and he's inside the house, where he finds his foster brother dead on the living room floor. He hears women upstairs and walks on to his foster mother and foster sister being murdered by a horrendous-looking, bald-headed man. He changes the guy and goes right through him, waking up in his bed screaming. At that point he gets a call from his foster father: his foster family has been wiped out, in exactly the way he had dreamed."

Jonathan's father, Lt. Parker (Michael Murphy, most recently seen in the NBC series *Tanner '88*), is a cop who's been on the trail of a serial killer for the past month. He's understandably surrounded when his foster son is able to describe the murders down to the position of the fallen bodies. Less than ideal recall: a significant piece of information from his prophetic dream.

a television repair truck from Parker's TV Repair parked in the driveway of the house. Parker and several back-up policemen storm Pinker's repair shop, only to be taken by surprise by their quarry. Pinker dispatches four of the men and gets away—but not before he looks eyes with Jonathan, whom he instinctively knows is responsible for blowing the whistle on him. Thus begins a film long chase-ladder versus warrior—that culminates inside the labyrinth of a television set.

Craven was recently quoted as say-

Craven feels audiences are ready for a new, industrial-strength villain.

ing that the once nightmare Freddy Krueger had, in his opinion, evolved into a vanguardian predator, a sort of Steaky Craven with claws, and that horror audiences were ready for a new, industrial-strength villain. Craven reportedly took offense to the remark and threatened a lawsuit until Craven cautioned him that the comparison was not intended as an insult. In fact, seeing Pinker, Craven was consciously setting out to create a harder-edged character that would not only click with audiences, but one that he would own the rights to from the outset. Unbelievable as it may seem, he owns not a single percentage point of merchandising rights to Freddy, whom he immortalized in the original *Nightmare on Elm Street*.

"There's a certain amount of competition between myself and New Line Cinema at this point, since they own Freddy," Craven admitted. "So it behooved me to go out and create my own character. New Line's philosophy regarding Freddy has been to make him into a product on the order of a Big Mac—readily consumable, easily replicated and disposable by all. The wrap-



Jonathan Parker, Steven Seagal's alter ego, is summoned to help bring to kill Jonathan.

nal way he was conceived, was that he was a truly evil man, really frightening. He has tended more and more to become a jokester. I wanted to get back to a killer who was a real 'by hand' killer and was truly scary."

The original idea for *Sleeper* evolved from a series Craven was developing at the request of 20th Century Fox Television, entitled *Dreamcatcher*. It was based on a character who was electrified but did not die, instead he became revitalized and found he was able to move into other people's homes as pure electrical energy. Each week he would assume another body (and another identity), and the story would evolve from there. Forseeing major script problems with such a premise, Fox passed on the project. So Craven decided to turn it into a feature.

"But then *The Shocker* came out, and it had a lot of similarities to my script, so I realized that I would have to go beyond my original idea. I was thinking one day about why *Nightmare On Elm Street* became so popular. The feeling was that it got into something—dreaming—that was a universal event, that was mysterious and often threatening. I was thinking, 'What else is in our culture that's universal, ubiquitous and sort of dream like, and represents our collective unconsciousness?' And it dawned on me: television."

While a handful of films have toyed with the insidious nature of television—*Videodrome* and *Pollack's*, for example—Craven felt that none of them had explored the subject with much scrutiny. Suddenly *Sleeper's* plot opened up. Pinker would be a

TV repairman who goes entry into people's homes through legitimate means and then murders them. After his experience on the electric chair he would have the ability to take over people's bodies—a seven-year-old girl, a construction worker, a mother—by substituting her living space. Later he would realize that he can travel through television, interact with the program being, and appear in any living room in town for the same murderous purposes—a highly ambitious concept by any standards.

Pinker can transport himself into people's TVs and step out into their living rooms.

Did Craven have second thoughts that the concept might be too much too soon? "I would be a liar if I didn't say that we got in over our heads—if we had it to do over again we would have been much more terrified," he said. "As you go along and you realize it's getting bigger and bigger, you keep solving problems and you somehow manage to make it happen. And I had support from two key people: Jacques Huetten, who shot *Nightmare* for me—he's very technically oriented and advanced in his knowledge of cinema.

Continued on page 54

Left: Pinker possesses the doctor at the execution and she attacks Officer Purton. Below: Jonathan and Pinker plunge out of a TV set into a living room full of "research potatoes."



RETROSPECTIVE

THE ASSISTANT



The Assistant (1999) is a black and white film directed by David Lauder. It is a short film that is 10 minutes long. It is a retrospective of the film.

From *Frankenstein* to *Re-Animator*, these poor devils are slaves to their masters—the mad scientists—who depend on them to do their fiendish deeds

By Donald Farmer

It's become the ultimate general catch-the-night-of-an-interview, very much associated with his leering, hunchbacked assistant. It's an image parodied in horror spoofs and cartoons, and even veteran stars like Boris Karloff and Vincent Price have joked his at the image in TV commercials. And although today's horror heroes like Freddy, Jason and Leatherface prefer to work solo, the rule of "mad mind and evil" in horror films was once more the rule than the exception.

Universal's *Frankenstein* series provides the most popular—and often unimaged—cache for these helpmates.

The role of "mad assistants" was once more the rule than the exception.

reminiscently known for their bad posture, slurred speech and poor work habits. According to Steven Schaefer's *Monsters on TV*, "the quintessential hunchbacked assistant" was character Dwight Frye, as Fritz Todman, the James Whale's *Frankenstein*, and Karl in the director's classic sequel *The Bride of Frankenstein*, this time playing a body snatcher employed by Dr. Frankenstein (Ernest Thesiger).

But while both films were loosely based on the 1818 Mary Shelley novel, it was screenwriter Robert Flory (died by Universal) story editor Richard Schayer to adapt the Shelley novel—though Flory's name was

removed from the film's credits who conceived an easy screenplay for Dr. Frankenstein's madhouse creation. The film lets the blame partly fall on Fryer for grabbing the wrong brain—the one with a huge label warning: "Abuse not from Dr. Waldman's medical college. Shirley originally suggested it."



Although Bela Lugosi, as Igor, received third billing after Karloff and Wallace in *Son of Frankenstein*, his performance was the most memorable of all.

been novel that the monster had the potential for normality, but became more deranged when rejected by its creator.

Thus can't say that the notion of protagonist and mad assistant is purely a Hollywood invention. Arguably familiar with Cervantes' Don Quixote (like Dr. Frankenstein, an idealistic

dreamer) and his comic square Sancho can spot an inkling of inspiration for horror's "mad assistant" tradition. Of course, the year before Universal unleashed *Frankenstein* on the world, the studio produced *Dracula*, a film somewhat more faithful to its literary source. Readers of the Bram Stoker novel were already familiar with Renfield, the Count's bug-eating underling, and Frye's vivid portrayal of him set the standard for dozens of later Renfields, ranging from Klaus Kinski in director Jean Pierre Jeunet's *Dracula* to Roland Eager in Warner Bros.' 1931 *Dracula*. In all these films, the image of Renfield gobbling spiders and flies—hoping to gain their life force—reinforces Dracula's deadly power over mankind more blatantly than the sight of a dove swooning on a grave does.

Curiously, while Hammer Films' 1968 *Horror of Dracula* is the only major adaptation to drop the Renfield

Film was captured in his master, Dr. Frankenstein (Colin Clive).



House of Frankenstein (right) helps Peter Cushing's Dr. Frankenstein climb on a new band in *Frankenstein and the Monster From Hell*.



At least from the Universal and Hammer Dracula to later-day versions, the charity count stayed firmly in the spotlight. Things weren't too simple with Universal's *Frankenstein* as was, though, when Bela Lugosi replaced Dwight Frye as the obligatory assistant, something unexpected happened—Lugosi upstaged the monster!

Bart, Son of *Frankenstein* top-billed Boris Karloff and Basil Rathbone, but it was Lugosi as the broken-hearted Igor who stole the show. With a mix of cunning and decency not seen in Frye's performances, Igor became the screen's perfect mad assistant. Where Fritz saw *Frankenstein's* monster as just someone to terrify and abuse, only Igor realized the creature's more exploitable potential—and used this unappetizing power for revenge against his enemies. And when the creature was up for a new brain in *Ghost of Frankenstein*, Igor was quick to volunteer his own, though the outcome wasn't quite what he hoped for. Ironically, after donating his brain to the monster in *Ghost*, Lugosi ended up in the familiar boots and headpiece for the sequel *Frankenstein Meets the Wolfman*, though the script made no mention of the previous film's team split. With Igor irretrievably out of the series, Universal reverted to the tried and true branchbacked assistant gimmick for their back to back *House of Frankenstein* and *House of Dracula*, with J. Carroll Nash as the kind-hearted branchback Daniel in the former and Jesse Adams as the screen's first (and last) Dracula's branchbacked assistant in *House of Dracula*. For the record, though the series name wrap-up *Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein* combined the monster, Dracula, the Wolfman and even the Incredible Man, none saw the film failed to slip in a good branchback or two.

When it was time for Hammer to be-

character, subsequent films in the studio's *Dracula* series introduced a succession of servants who, like Renfield, serve the Count's needs without becoming vampires themselves. Kloss in *Dracula*, Prince of Darkness is introduced as a disciple waiting to assassinate Dracula's widow, and in the direct sequel, *Dracula Has Risen From The Grave*, Christopher Lee's Dracula recruits a priest (Edward Hopper) to do his dirty work. Unlike his predecessors, Hopper finally breaks from Dracula's will and helps the young hero drive away him. The following year's *They Are the Flesh of Dracula* also saw a mortal disciple (Linda Hayden) defy the Count in time for a showdown. Maybe that's why Hammer's next sequel, *Scream of Dracula*, saw Lee keep his sidekick in line with a red hot sword. The studio's final *Dracula* installment had Lee assisted by Johnny Alwood (Dunsany star Christopher Pennel) in *Dracula A.D. 1872*, and by a group of powerful Londoners in *The Satanic Rites of Dracula*. Though generally considered a landmark code to Hammer's 15-year *Dracula* saga, *Satanic Rites* at least offers a significantly forceful twist to the vampire's assistant variations. Rather than

dominating rural bumpkins, empty-headed tea-sippers or easily led astray, Dracula enlists the cream of Britain's financial power elite to lay the groundwork for plans of world domination. Combining their political punch with a basement of vampire girls and an in-house army of motorcycle toughs, the Count was backed with a formidable force of human and inhuman allies, but—as always—Van Helsing's merry table wine will have its mark.





The Flesh and the Devil



Clayey about the Devil

gon smacking the class. Universal shocked, the studio found a slight problem with redubbing *Frankenstein*. Though the Mary Shelley novel was considered public domain and fair game for filmmakers, the 1931 film version was still under strict copyright. Translation: anything "borrowed" from Universal's *Frankenstein*, from the creature's make-up design to even a handclacked assistant reminding Fritz, "wouldn't you like a wolf's breast?" After discussing the alternatives with their attorneys, Hammer and screenwriter Jimmy Sangster opted for the safest route—to make a film with no possible reason, blame to the further Karloff version. Sangster decided his Dr. Frankenstein still needed an assistant, though, but instead of a deformed mass, now a perfect opportunity to counteract Frankenstein's animalistic intensity with calm and reason. As Paul, actor Robert Urichhart began a tradition that carried through all seven of the studio's *Frankenstein* films—portraying the unscrupulous Baron with more level-headed, rational assistant. Where Baron Frankenstein (Peter Cushing) wanted medical progress at any cost, Paul saw that even science has its limits. Paul may have had echoes of the Dr. Waldman character from Universal's *Frankenstein*, but his pivotal role in *Curse of Frankenstein* provided more of a constant balance to Frankenstein's villainy—even giving the Baron's fiancée a shoulder to cry on by the facade. When Cushing returned the following year in *The Revenge of*

Frankenstein, the handsome assistant was played by Francis Matthews, though Sangster had sketched the Baron a shade more sympathetically this time, with an assistant slightly more relevant of medical "progress." When Frankenstein (opening as "Dr. Stein") is beaten half to death at the climax, Matthews ably playing transplants has been into an available body. Though, like Igor's brain transplant in *Ghost of Frankenstein*, the operation was ignored by future films in the Hammer series.

Among its various faults, 1964's *The Bride of Frankenstein* paired Cushing with his dearest assistant ever: the haplessly blind Sander Elia, but the film picked up steam when Peter Woodhouse came aboard as Zerkow, an evil hypnotist who orders the monster to "pursue" his enemies. Next to Zerkow, the Hammer came off looking positively heroic and—for a change—the tense climax actually encouraged audiences to root for Frankenstein!

Returning three years later with horribly burned hands (presumably from the fiery finale of *Earth*), Cushing had two assistants helping out in *Frankenstein Created Woman*. Thelma Walters as Dr. Herta (displaying a more comic touch than previous sub-bosses) and Hans, a village boy whose soul ended up in Frankenstein's 31-mile experiment. With arguably the best script of the series and Walter's wonderfully malleable trained performance as Herta, the Cushing/Walters pairing was irreplaceable. Regrettably, while Walters returned for 1964's

Frankenstein Must Be Destroyed, he had only a couple of scenes as a polite official, while the more likable Baron on view in *Earth of Frankenstein* and *Frankenstein Created Woman* was traded in for the type of arch military Cushing hadn't displayed since *Curse of Frankenstein*—blackmailing a young couple (Gwen Ward and Veronica Cartwright) into assisting him then raping and murdering Carlson. As the

Columbia Pictures, in a novel approach, showed a werewolf assisting a vampire.

refurbished sub-bosses Ward and Cartwright made a convincingly doomed couple (though the eventual death was a shame) for Hammer herself gave this dark film an even gloomier cast.

Cushing's final appearance as the Baron in *Frankenstein and the Monster from Hell*, began with a young medical researcher (Glenn Danz) rescued for attempting to duplicate Frankenstein's now legendary experiments. Conveniently enough, Brian ended up in the very prison where his old master as the inmate physician, and the two quickly join forces to transplant a gorilla's brain into a brain's body. The film's idea of pairing Frankenstein with another medical master for an assistant—one already used to buying parts from both scientists—might first seem at odds with earlier films in the series, but even Robert



In *Devils Are Also from The Grave*, Brandon (Christopher Lee) reveals a prior (Brian Hoppe) as his assistant.



Peter Cushing was paired with Boris Karloff in *The End of Frankenstein*. Shown here, Peter Woodhewer plays Hoffman, an evil hypnotist who orders the monster to kill.

drama the hour when Frankenstein suggests making a mate girl with the monster. Their clash had been devilishly clever sparks, but the Cushing/Ugolaugh face-off in *Curse of Frankenstein*, though, and Bryant seemed to regard Cushing as only a little worse by the end. Between *Frankenstein Must Be Destroyed* and *Frankenstein and the Monster from Hell*, Hammer also produced its only *Frankenstein* film without Cushing—the campy *Horror of Frankenstein*, played by writer/director Stuart Rosenberg as basically a wince-inducing remake of *Curse of Frankenstein*. Ralph Bates made a listlessly disguised Baron, while Graham James was unmovable (but little else) as the narrow-minded assistant, who wants no part of human experiments. The film's real human was Dean Cain Price as a talkative grave robber who winds up as Frankenstein's and yet, Price had another excellent turn as a "mad assistant" in the following year's *Tombs of Blood*, supplying Satanic amusement for a faded nobleman.

and when Price was cast as Baron Frankenstein in James Franco's *Embrace of the Vampire*, his pudgy assistant was played by the director himself.

Naturally, the success of the Universal and Hammer horror output was duly noted by competing studios but—among the outsiders—Columbia Pic-

Horror assistants—both mad and otherwise—are seldom revived today.

tures had the novel approach of having a vampire with a werewolf assistant! The company's 1944 *Return of the Vampire* teamed Bela Lugosi as vampire Armand Tola, and his henchman was talking werewolf Matt White! The make-up designed for Willis didn't measure up to Universal's Lon Chaney, Jr. version, but the film still deserves a footnote for offering the first screenplay horror assistant. Later

films like *Blood of the Vampire* were more derivative of the *Frankenstein* image (with Victor Madden as the crippled, pop-eyed lab helper), but it was cult director Ed Wood, Jr. who introduced the only post-Universal monster assistant to carve out a challenging career in genre film. Wood's *Beast of the Monster* was strictly a shoestring production, with a down on his back Lugosi acting almost out into cardboard sets. But so Lugosi's monstrous assistant, Lobo. For Johnson created the first great "mad assistant" since Lugosi's own Igor nearly 15 years earlier. Aish even who managed to see *Beast of the Monster* during its limited theatrical runs couldn't help but remember Johnson, whose greatest fame came after his death when TV began broad-casting *Beast: The Black Legion* and—naturally—*Man 8* from Outer Space. Johnson's barrel-chested torso and avianoid bald head made him a natural scene-stealer, though attempts to cast him against type, like a research assistant in the opening of *Beast of Furor* (Pete weren't entirely successful). But despite the short-term spotlight film, Johnson made a name for him self among genre diehards, becoming the rare horror sideman who outshone most top-billed co-stars.

Of course, a few horror names more popular than Johnson's have proved willing to take the occasional assistant role here and there. Peter Lorre played second string to Vincent Price and Boris Karloff in Roger Corman's *The Raven*, while Karloff himself co-starred as Lugosi's delirious servant in Universal's *The Raven* nearly 30 years earlier. And both Karloff and Lugosi played the grave-robbing assistants employed by Dr. Macabre (Henry Daniell) in Robert Wise's *The Body Snatchers*, though—let's exchange—Karloff was top billed over the film's lead (Daniell). Adapted from the Robert Louis Stevenson short story, *The Body Snatchers* is the most notable, but certainly not the last film made on the corpse procurement subject. John Gilling's *The Flesh and the Blood* paired Peter Cushing as medical adventurer Dr. Kato, opposite George Rose and Donald Pleasence as Burke and Harv in a film unusually explicit for the early 1960's. *Body snatchers* have since appeared in everything from Hammer's *Dr. Jekyll and Sister Hyde* to the comic book inspired *Witch of Horror* (though the class production of late is Freddie Francis' *The Doctor and the Devils*, where body snatchers peddle their wares to a pre-James Bond Timothy Dalton).

From today's vantage point, it's easy to view horror assistants—both mad and otherwise—as mere a staple of by



gone years, seldom viewed today. The most popular "mad scientist" film of the 80's, Stuart Gordon's *Re-Animator* employed the morbidly humorous formula of deranged scientist plus conscience-stricken assistant, while the old Universal *Frankenstein* variations have become the exclusive property of horror movies (beginning with the back-fused Terry Younger from Roman Polanski's *The Fearless Vampire*

Killer, continuing with the hapless Aron Jaegering in Andy Warhol's *Frankenstein and Dracula*, and culminating with Marty Feldman in *Young Frankenstein*). These days, the beach-baked helper seen by many people than ever "head" of Dwight Dyer in Vincent Price's little pal in *House of Wax* commercials ("It makes a monstrous job easy"). But it's never too late to turn things around, right?



Top right: Marty Feldman in *Young Frankenstein*. Left: Peter Cushing and Barbara Shelley in *Re-Animator*. Above: Aron Jaegering and Vito Kiri in Andy Warhol's *Frankenstein*.



THE ABYSS

Director James Cameron's underwater thriller promises to survive an already water-logged genre

By Kyle Connolly

A flip observer of this summer's genre offerings might say that Hollywood has writer on the brain. No less than four terror-at-the-bottom-of-the-sea movies will have opened by August (including Roger Corman's adaptation of Michael Crichton's *Lords of the Deep*), and industry insiders are predicting that the trend will prove to be the most unhealthy one.

The fate of the underwater genre, from Cameron's *Deepstar Six*, performed poorly in its brief run, and George Costanza' *Evolution*, the offering that borrows most heavily from Ridley Scott's *Abyss*, did little better, slipping off Warner's film rentals chart in just two weeks. While Corman's *Lords of the Deep* remains an unproven (and much underpublicized) entity, confidence is running high at 20th Century Fox, which in July will unveil James Cameron's follow-up to *Abyss*. The *Abyss* II appears to be the lone offering among all these aquatic thrillers with any chance to make waves at the box office.

Producer Gale Anne Hurd, wife of

writer-director James Cameron, stayed awhile working for producer Roger Corman in the special-effects department at New York's, was clearly unconcerned about the poor showing of *Deepstar Six* and *Evolution* when she discussed *The Abyss* recently. While she previously refrained from talking past shots at her competitors (but

Hurd made it clear that it wasn't another "monster-under-water" movie.

staged *evolution* with *Lords of the Deep*), she made it clear that *The Abyss* was not another "monster-under-water" movie. What, then, set it apart from the others?

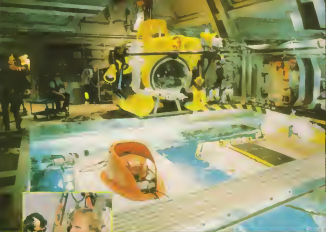
"It's much less a horror film than it is a dramatic tale about characters and emotions," Hurd said. "It certainly has elements of science fiction, but more so in the sense of suspense and wonder than outright scares. Obviously, there will be moments when the audience will jump, but more than just being a roller-coaster ride, I think it will raise people to tears—which is not an emotion that people tend to associate

with our genre, and I think *The Abyss* will and should."

Another element that distinguishes *The Abyss*, according to Hurd, is its authenticity. Unlike *Deepstar Six* and *Evolution*, which primarily took their set on sound stages, many shots to create the illusion of water, 40 percent of *The Abyss*'s five scenes principal photography took place underwater, in two platforms inside two specially constructed underwater filming tanks. Early on it was to construct the site of a never-completed nuclear power station outside Geffery, South Carolina, Hurd realized and that Cameron's script demanded a host of reality that special effects alone could not have achieved.

One of the major action elements in the film is a chase between two submarines with people inside them," she explained. "There are only so many times when you can put away to long shots in which people are now projected into little movie-screened underwater craft. You have to be in a position to get those great wide shots that you can't do any way but for real. That's the wonderful thing about water: Unlike space, you can shoot real-forest."

"This will be an aquatic experience," Continued on page 42



Above: The three submarines are stored in the hangar of Deepforce. Left: Writer/director James Cameron. Right: Ed Collup (Michael Biehn) and Schoonick (Christopher Murphy) share their insight. Below left: Richard the scuba tank at filming interior of Deepforce scenes with Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio and Ed Harris. Below right: Finding a scene under water.



Greg Nicotero

Make-up and effects people have lovingly created some of the most horrific and memorable movie monsters, but in doing so, they unknowingly provoke what many of them consider to be an insidious evil, one that often leaves the monster makers powerless—the MPAA. FX whiz Greg Nicotero speaks out about the horrors inflicted upon his creatures by the Ratings Board



From Beyond, Raw Deal, Creepshow II, Predator, Working Stiffs, Phantom II, et al

During his stint as the "Creature Supervisor" on *Deepstar Six*, Nicotero teamed up with Berger and associate Robert Kurtzman, to organize the K.N.R.-EFX Group. Their collective skills have been engaged for films concurrently in production, including *Night Hawk*, *1000 Paces Ahead*, *II* and *Night Angel*, in



addition to a collaboration with Kevin Yagher on *The Borrowers*. The company is currently absorbed in the effects work for *A Nightmare on Elm Street Part 5: Dream Child* and *Ghost* (working, the latter for Disney Pictures).

Nicotero's prospective projects include an adaptation of the recently published novel, *Deadline*, written by John Skapp and Craig Spector (reviewed in *MF42*). The effects artist, who owns the option with partner Jon Winogradoff, would prefer to "work on the film in a producing capacity."

Nicotero considers *Morror Shouts* to be his company's "biggest break." The director James Isaac, felt that the K.N.R.-EFX Group would be "just the guys" to deliver the murders and mayhem of killer Max Jenks. Unfortunately, that perennial watchdog, the MPAA, is not only shorting the company's work from

Horror Shout, but threatening to censor all the "offensive" Grand Guignol effects that are a modern staple of the genre.

I think horror films are more vulnerable to the MPAA Board because of a distributor's reluctance to releasing a film without a rating or a well-organized X for violence. Censorship conflicts prevailed in George Romero's *Dawn of the Dead* (1978) which was also refused film as a make-up artist and effect technician. The original script was kept the greatest in the world, and we often referred to it as "The Ten Commandments of Zombie Movies," the financiers, however, would raise only \$3 million and since the film was specifically tailored for an "R" rating, if George had compromised for an "R" rating, his budget would have expanded up to about \$4 million, though I'm not sure of the exact figures. But George insisted on an uncut movie, and was forced to rewrite the script for a smaller budget. We eventually edited a censored version of the screenplay to keep the TV audience safe.



The *Morror Shout*

"The horror cinema, to paraphrase George Romero, is like a roller coaster ride," explains Greg Nicotero. "You know before you're seated that the ride is going to be scary. There will be portions that may even make you feel uncomfortable, but the ride will conclude with you feeling exhausted, exhilarated and laughing with your friends."

Mr. Nicotero works with the film architects, including Romero and Sam Raimi, to develop those fool-proof dips and peaks that merit passengers to scream or shudder their stomachs with a spring cleaning. Nicotero, however, is cautioning all good thrill-seekers that the MPAA is derailing the roller coaster.

As a fledgling makeup artist, Nicotero launched his career in earnest with *Dawn of the Dead*. The movie introduced Nicotero to Tom Savini, bonding a professional rapport that, five years later, "still holds strong." 1985 proved to be a professional "turning point": seeking the advice of coworker and father partner, Howard Berger, he moved from his Pennsylvania home turf to California. Nicotero promptly landed some significant assignments: *Jaws* (as First Mate,

stealing the original script is a great story! This should serve as an example of how an untested movie is instantly considered with a kind of subliminal censorship; the company wouldn't make a more substantial investment, because an untested movie is often deemed throwaway and prime time advertisements and many newspapers refuse their ads. I remember the Florida debut of *House of the Dead*; it premiered with an "X" rating, and I had to convince my mother that it was a porno flick, but a horror film. Florida, as well as other areas, didn't know how to deal with an unrated movie, so they branded it with an "X."

But *Dead* if it was also plagued with rating problems. I had already seen the first *Dead* and really flipped over its extra blande effects. I was hired for the sequel by Mark Shostrom, and learned that director Sam Raimi wouldn't shoot certain "banned" scenes because he anticipated the ratings board would eventually demand their omission from the completed film. The De Laurentiis Entertainment Group (DEG) who financed the film, advised Sam to shoot for an "R" rating. Sam wasn't afforded the luxury of shooting just different versions that is—"down and dirty" vs. "highly barred over" scenes and an alternate, "sanitized" version where the violence would have been tamed. The result, Sam made a more total interpretation of his original concept and submitted what he assumed to be a "tame" movie to the ratings board. The MPAA looked at the finished product and collectively said:

"Forget it! This guy's movie. We're not going to give you an "R" rating unless you make all these cuts." This was their verdict, even though Sam specifically advised us not to go too heavy on the blood. People couldn't understand why the demons had colors of green, black, etc. at actually it was Sam's objection to the ratings board! His dislike easily revealed the visualization of red blood being explicitly spilted in the cabin and the woods. Since the assorted demons were of supernatural origin, he took the liberty of changing the pigment of their body fluids to all colors but red; hence, audiences would be more likely to think of the "blood" as "green and black stuff" rather than gore. In spite of these precautions, the board slapped the film with an "X" rating. DEG was forced to set up its own company, called Newbond, to release *Evil Dead II* as an unrated movie.

A year ago I also formed my own company with long time co-workers Howard Berger and Robert Kormanian called the KSNBFX Group. Our first assignment was furnishing make-up effects for *Intruder* (shamefully *Night*



The Horror Show

Club) a slasher film set in a super-market. Scott Spiegel who had co-written *Evil Dead II* wrote and directed the film. Unfortunately none of our effects from that film will ever be seen. The Board removed every one of our "death scenes" ironically half way through negotiating a deal on the special effects. The producer said:

"We're really trying to keep the budget."

"The Board, which has nothing to do with the creative process, dictates the removal of certain scenes."

Well I don't think we're going to do these effects I implied. Here's my opinion, this is a horror film. If you don't have any horrific elements in it, why waste the money and the film stock?" I finally persuaded the producers to retain the effects scenes, or, going, "If some comes to watch you can release an unrated version on video. The controversy is worth more rentals because people will want to see that footage that was formerly excised." We were very pleased with our effects which kept the film flowing, though they were accomplished with almost literally a five dollar budget. *Intruder* was the final film produced for Empire Pictures. The company dissolved before the film was released. As a result, *Intruder* was taken away from the director and temporarily lost to him. Paramount eventually picked up the film's option, and they made the prime movie. In order to secure a self-rating, all of the effects footage was deleted! Besides the producer (not the director) are consulted for advice. The Board, which has nothing to do with the creative process dictates the removal of certain scenes. The edited version of *Intruder* will surface, direct to video, in the spring.

More recently, we did the effects for *Warrior Skin*. The photos, printed in this magazine's coverage of the movie (*MPF #10*, originate from scenes that

have since been deleted from the movie! Many people in the industry think the MPAA polices all the film because producer Sean Cunningham managed to slip his 1980 hit *Friday the 13th* by them. Sean has been indirectly linked with *Friday the 13th* even the ads for *Director's Cut* (1988) read "see it!" from the man who brought you *Friday the 13th*! Naturally, the Board reacts with "Ah ha! This is the guy who got away with murder on *Friday the 13th*! *Friday* promised to a public outcry and the ratings board was blamed for approving a "blood bath" with an "R" rating. The MPAA, which has never forgiven Sean, has been creatively "poisoned" all films since *Friday's* original release.

From the beginning, director Jan Hammer's impression of *Warrior Skin* was to conceptualize a movie that went over the top. The film is prefaced with a scene where Lance Henriksen makes a forced entrance into a diner; he was approaching from a meat grinder, a head flying in a toaster, the eyes explode, hands boiling in oil and blood smeared all over the walls. It's not intended to be simply grotesque, but black humor—a profile of an obviously psychotic killer. We had the legs, the severed head and everything else to the Board.

Personally, I don't understand the Board's discrimination of "offensive" scenes. As a random example, there's a sequence in *Redwood*, *Madhouse II* where a guy shows the skin from his body with a mass blade. Though the rated version didn't linger on the gore, it's a brutally violent scene that is omitted in the movie. However there's an hallucinatory sequence in *Warrior*

Continued on page 62



Evil Dead II

ENEMY FROM SPACE

A British-made mixture of thrills and thought from the Golden Age of Sci-Fi

Enemy From Space is a

Quatermass II

Canal+ Video

Homebox, 1997

Star Nigel Kneale,

Val Guest

Star Val Guest

Star Brian Donlevy, John

Langdon, Sydney James, Bryan

Forbes, William Franklyn, Wre

Day, Tom Chatter

—By Daniel Schweiger—

Though England's most renowned doctor may be named Who her real scientific adventurer is Dr Bernard Quatermass. First created for TV by Nigel Kneale in 1953, this is

agency that reaches beyond the Earth.

Enemy From Space immediately sets its gripping tone as a terrified woman and her mysteriously burned boyfriend race through the night, the scene heightened by James Bernard's suspenseful score. Almost colliding with the couple is the Doctor (Brian Donlevy), on his way back to a Moon rocket base that's just been financially gutted by short-sighted bureaucrats. Quatermass can't explain the V-shaped scar on the man's neck, nor does he seem to care beyond getting him to a hospital. However, the Doctor's typical sage turns to eager interest when a technician points out growing numbers of meteor showers all pinpointed over the isolated area of

the unwavering Quatermass pressures officials to reveal that the steel mine is a secretive "synthetic food" factory, which practically goes over night. The Doctor promptly sets him self on a guided tour of the place, along with Broadhead (Tom Chatter), a Member of Parliament who shares his suspicious. Though their perpetually cheerful guide tries to keep the men together so that "all can be revealed," Broadhead weakens away and subsequently perishes in black goo, and the Doctor barely escapes a kidnapping attempt. Discovering that the refinery's casters are actually miniature rockets launched from an asteroid orbiting the Moon, Quatermass remarks, "I think we're on the verge of something ugly."

The film's scientific approach to these fantastical elements keeps them from turning silly, even when Quater-

Enemy was conceived as a parable of one man fighting the government/industrial complexes.

mass ends up dodging the Goddard-sized alien. As with the Doctor/Doctor films, Kneale's approach is to give the oldest occurrences perfectly normal explanations, and then to reveal how they might become fiction later. The refinery indeed serves as a food plant, but its deadly substance isn't meant for human mouths. The depiction of Quatermass' Moon base realizes his goal of creating a habitable environment in the midst of inhospitable surroundings, but in this case it's our violent atmosphere that's lethal. Quatermass uncovers these facts like a fantastical Sherlock Holmes, using his deductive reasoning to show how an invasion can occur right under our noses—or while our eyes are voluntarily closed.

Quatermass thus has perished out the series' references to Third Reich tactics, and they're most apparent in *Enemy From Space*. Symbolization here doesn't suggest the Communist brainwashing of *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, but instead a whole-hearted devotion to Nazism. The order

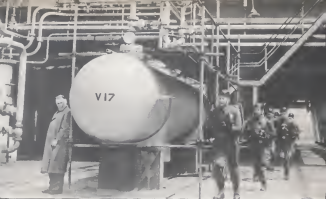


trapped rocket men went on to fight alien invasions at the cinema in *The Cragging Unknown* (British title, *The Quatermass Experiment*, 1955), *Five Million Years to Earth* (*Quatermass and the Pit*, 1968) and finally an television in *The Quatermass Conclusion*, 1968. However, it's 1967's *Enemy From Space* that joins *Parkville Planet* and *The Thing* as the pinnacle of Golden Age SF. Conceived by Kneale and director Val Guest (the Day the Earth Caught Fire) as a parable of one man fighting the government/industrial complexes and their blindly loyal masses, this challengingly logical tale pits Quatermass against a murderous con-

Winerton Flats

Quatermass and his assistant March (Bryan Forbes) go to investigate, and discover that the town no longer exists. In its place is a gigantic refinery, a near exact replica of the recently scuttled Moon base. When March goes to pick up one of the nearby casters, it shatters in an idle puff of smoke and leaves him with the tell tale V mark. Black-suited soldiers immediately appear to cart March off, and force Quatermass to leave at gunpoint.

The inhabitants of a town bordering the refinery are reluctant to locate March or provide information about the plant, as are London officials. But



of the refinery and its town is based on complicity and officially sanctioned violence. When the Doctor tells the people that they're helping to destroy the human race by working at the plant, all they can say is, "We've agreed to keep our mouths shut, same as in wartime." After all, the refinery pays them good money. The Gestapo-like militia doesn't seem quite human, but at least they keep the harder side. Propaganda posters are hung about the town by a watchful Camp Command, and Britain's stuffy politicians would rather forget that the place and its horrible plans exist as long as it helps the economy. The aliens mask their intentions with pleasant double talk, particularly the guide who insists that "all is well" as he takes Quatermass and Broadhead to get

their brains sucked out. The duped townspeople refuse to see their man-made true colors until a reporter is mercilessly gunned down and a harangue has her mind taken captive by the alien intelligence. Then they're more than happy to take up arms for Mother Earth.

The irony is that Quatermass doesn't seem to care much for the human race he's trying to save. He's a lab man at his roughest, people to the Doctor are little better than guinea pigs, easily sacrificed for scientific advancement. In *The Creeping Unknown*, the Doctor makes no apologies when his experiments are dissolved to proto-plasm. Though the creature they bring back averages death and destruction, Quatermass can't wait to start the experiment again. He rarely shows compassion for people possessed by the *Energy From Space*, only shooting them or running them over. A glaring example of this occurs when the Doctor lets a nervous stay in the town as possessed soldiers approach, even though the stay's phantasms won't make a difference in the long run. When the reporter gets shot and a police inspector wants to help, Quatermass barks, "What can you do now?" Only those closest to him, like Marsh and Broadhead, seem to matter. Quatermass is ordered the hero, but one who's been easily stopped of feeling, a lab man who's obviously sold his soul to science.

Inside uses technology to anchor

Quatermass uncovers the facts like a fantastical Sherlock Holmes.

his plot, but he has about as much love for it as he ultimately does for Quatermass. No matter what our advances are, Kneale insists they'll ultimately be used for destruction. The Doctor's Moon base/refinery is corrupted by the evil terrestrial is, its domes becoming brokers for toxic gas and sludge like before the Quatermass' rocket, which he dreams of sending men back and forth to the Moon as returned into a makeshift missile against the alien's base of operations, temporarily distracting our hopes of reaching the stars.

Though Quatermass emerges triumphant at the film's explosive conclusion, his victory is achieved at a terrible cost. The Moon project lies in ruins, and dozens of people have met untimely deaths. Kneale leaves us with the feeling that Earth will be on the verge of the same as long as its people allow themselves to be used as cattle by alien invaders—or by men like Quatermass. It's this mixture of thrill and thought that gives *Energy From Space* its highly regarded place as sci-fi's most sinister classic. □



A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET 5: THE DREAM CHILD

The latest Freddy-fest promises some new twists while going back to the series' roots

By Mark Sheppard

Not one to forget a slight, Freddy is still after Lisa Wilson, who played the character of Alice from the previous adventures on *Elm Street*. She's now pregnant by boyfriend Dan (Denny Hamill, also reprising his role, however wasted, beaten and weak Freddy is, he sees her forthcoming child as a way back to a reality ready for his brand of academic wit and gruesome mayhem. To boot, Alice has another tormentor: Freddy's mother, Amanda Krueger.

The newest *Nightmare* is shooting for an ideal combination of the old and the new. Australian director Stephen Hopkins (who also helmed the forthcoming thriller *A Dangerous Game*) is contributing his own vision to the project, while make-up man David Miller—who did the first film in the series—will be contributing his talents as well. And of course, how could *Elm Street 5* be complete without Robert Englund as that ultimate badkie, Freddy Krueger?

Both Englund and Freddy have come a long way the TV series, the new soundings, and the general infamy. What's the interest in a character who, unlike any other great movie monster, has no sympathetic side whatsoever? How can such a hateful fellow get to be so popular?

"Well, that may be exactly the key," Englund observed. "He vents in his evil, totally, and has much more of a three-dimensional personality than some other famous monsters, defined by his wound wit and jokes. Sort of the first nihilistic monster, and I think people can sort of see him as a symbol, which is what I and Wes Craven always thought he was. And I think it lets people distance themselves from the violence and enjoy the fantasies for what they are."

The *Elm Street* series has yet to exhaust itself of utterly dark and truly disturbing fantasies, even after some 48 TV episodes and the collected chest of five movies. "A Freddy film is about new effects and new ways of looking at things," said Hopkins during the introduction of *Elm Street 5*. "Take stuff like *Don't Look Now* and I'm trying to



combine that strangeness with the dream within a dream thriller genre. I'm not trying to make an art piece—I want 164 minutes of 'whoosh' from dreams one along with the creepiness."

"I'm working in close with Alan Munroe, the special effects supervisor who did *Deathstalker*. He's an extraordinary artist who really knows how the dreams and the movie motivate the effects rather than just throwing at you a sequence on the floor and hoping they'll work. This is also no longer about 15-year-old kids, but 18-year-old almost-adults, so it's a sequel, the only one so far I think that is wildly different. Freddy is branching out here, since the

Kim Bower kids no longer exist, so what's left to do but attack the unborn child of Alice, who's now dreaming while she's awake?"

A key sequence occurs in an insane asylum, dubbed "The Night of a Thousand Madmen," where we find out just where Freddy got his genes from—the rape of Amanda Krueger. It's a part of the tag off war of wits that makes up the entire movie," revealed Englund. "Alice dreams about Freddy now and for that she pays. She really has her workout out for her, to save herself and to save her child. It's a wonderful, 1940s M.C. Escher asylum sequence with a little Freddy puppet."

All this is standard fare for David Miller, who directs the make-up for the

"I coined the guy," adds Englund. "I want to see it through to the end."

first time since the first *Elm Street*. He's sort of an amazing hero among FX people because a lot of his superb work goes uncredited from the terrific estimations made for the forthcoming *Alice in the Forest of the Gods*, the best director's film every made, *The Terminator*. He has gone back to the "old Freddy" a bit, making subtle changes in the Seven Sinner make-up we've

(continued on page 88)





Frankly doesn't waste much time when it comes to getting up a lady coffin.



PREVIEW

In addition to werewolf hybrids on a movie set, *Night Breed*, Barker returns to direct what promises to be one of his biggest monster/fantasy movies yet.

NIGHTBREED



Clive Barker on the set

"I'm always loath to play definition games, but *Nightbreed* is not strictly a horror movie, though it certainly has horror elements. It's not a fantasy film, but it has fantasy elements. It's nowhere near as Grand Guignol as *Reframer*. It does have its moments, but its emphasis tends towards the fantastic rather than the gory. It has a lot of action in it, a lot of action, and a fair amount of spectacle for its relatively modest budget—though it's costing substantially more than the *Reframer* pictures." So spoke writer/director Clive Barker, four weeks into *Nightbreed*'s nine-week shoot at Pinewood Studios.

Scripted by Barker from his novel *Cabal*, the film marks the first of a three-picture deal that Film Futures (the company started by producer Chris Fyfe and Barker) signed with Morgan Creek Productions, with the others potentially comprising an adaptation of Barker's story "Blood of Celluloid" (from *Books of Blood* and *Nightbreed II*).

The story concerns three time-loser and woman-depresser Boone (Craig Sheffer, *Some Kind of Wonderful*, *That Was Then, This Is Now*) who, accused of a series of grisly murders, flees to Melian, a legendary city populated by the living dead. Pursuing him as he seeks refuge is the port of last week and

his lover Lori (Anna Dörm, a Broadway actress whose film credits include Oliver Stone's *Born on the Fourth of July*), the naive redneck cop Eggerman (Charles Hall, *My Secret Shame*, *Altered States*) and the psychokiller responsible for his plight.

It's soon obvious that Boone's future is inextricably linked with the fate of Melian, and that he, as one of the *Nightbreed*—mythological living dead shape-shifters, hidden from man for centuries—will have to defend the underground metropolis against human foes far more repulsive than Melian's monsters.

Nightbreed is Film Futures' third

The *Nightbreed* are mythological living dead shape-shifters, hidden from man for centuries.

picture, following *Reframer* and *Meltdown* and marks Barker's return to directing. *Reframer*, having been helmed by Tony Randel. Budgeted between \$7.50 million, the film is scheduled for September release in the USA through 20th Century Fox, and is, according to special make-up and costume designer Bob Keen, "probably one of the biggest monster movies ever."

Nightbreed begins principal photography on three soundstages—some outdoor sets—notably an impressive mock-up of Melian's exterior—and will take in a week of location shooting in Calgary. Since inception it has lost two of its intended stars—singers Mase Ai-

mond and Sean Castro, the latter through conflicting schedules, the former due to countermeasures of record company logos—and suffered a setback when a small fire broke out on the large set soundstage, resulting in the sprinkler system washing away the majority of one set.

"This film operates on a larger scale than other *Reframer* or McQueen, in terms of the scale of scenes," of sound



David Cronenberg portrays the sinister psychiatrist Decker.

work, of special effects, and in terms of the story itself," Barker told *Horrorfan*. "It's also a showcase for Bob Keen's Image Animation—there are an incredible number of monsters in it."

Presently the film boasts 128 monsters, though Keen's co-designer Geoff Porteus estimated it considerably higher. "Clive just keeps coming up with more ideas," said Porteus. "A lot of new creatures have been made out of bits and pieces—some have even gone back to the old corks-flores-on-the-skin routine, which works when you keep them in the background. Then there are the human characters like Rachel, the smoke-changer she looks perfectly human but can transform completely into smoke. There will be quite a few monsters on the ground who will give the appearance of being human but will have special qualities which you may or may not see in this film. If we throw in a few interestingly decorated 'transmuter' too, I'd say we've got nearer to 200 monsters."

Pressing over the usual trappings of mutations in *Reframer*, whose diabolical antecedents are described by Barker: "The Knights Templar brought back from the Holy Land a god called Baphomet, and they were burned at the stake for worship of him. The Renaissance also had Baphomet in their





system, as did the Maori. He's a very ambiguous god—we may really know where he came from. Some say it was the severed head of John the Baptist that talked brought back by the Knights, others suggested it was some kind of Islamic god."

Porteus provided some further details of Bagboomer's conception. "He's your average ten-foot-high god. He's relatively humanoid in form, apart from certain areas—the genitals being one. He's one of the Old Gods, and most of them were destroyed. Most of Bagboomer has been destroyed, but the remnants have resurrected him at the very bottom of their metropolis, and use him mainly to provide a light and power source to keep the metropolis going. For his interest," continued Porteus, "which is supposed to be made up of bright white light, we have about 500,000 fiber optic tubes. The ten-foot model was hung in Bagboomer's chambers, and for the end of the movie, when he picks up Boomer, we used areas transparent that we could hang around and close up. These are also various sized models of Bagboomer and Boomer which, when used in conjunction with the live actors, will hopefully make the sequence more believable. The ten-foot model has probably been the most difficult effect in the film—myself and Steve Paster have spent seven months just working on that."



Harrier's superior brightness, the spiritual mother of the Berserkers.

Despite the vast number of monsters, director and crew are adamant that the creatures serve a definite purpose, and are not present merely for a gratuitous heart festival. "I take my Blood very seriously," claimed Barker. "Maybe more seriously than I took the Creature. The challenge we face is getting the viewer to take on not one or two monsters, but a whole society of creatures. Obviously there are featured creatures who appear for longer, have dialogue and so on, but we thought the best way to give a feeling

of depth was to have a wealth of monsters in the background, producing a feeling that this is just the tip of the iceberg."

Rees added that, "One of the most important things we had to bear in mind was that no matter how outrageous the creatures were, you still had to feel for them. There was no point in doing anything that would produce the wrong emotional response, so the big teeth and claws were kept for the Berserkers. It's very easy to build some thing with big teeth and claws, but



Behind the scenes work on a stop-motion creature.

these aren't that type of creature—you have to believe in them."

If the majority of *Nightbreed's* monsters are the kind you could risk taking home for dinner, what, then, are the Berserkers? "They're designed on the basis of American footballers," answered Forster. "They're ten tons of teeth, claws and leather, and if you run into you, there wouldn't be much left."

"They're looked away for the *Jaws's* point as much as anything," added Kern. "They'll eat anything—most of the time they're eating each other's crap, but they're just as happy to eat humans, Berserks or anything that gets in their way."

Considering that a film from a man who normally delights in taking his viewers and readers on disturbing—and frequently graphic—tours of Hell, it came as no little surprise that several cast and crew members commented on the religious nature of *Nightbreed*. Said Kern: "It started out with a very different atmosphere, and what we've got now is a very religious film. It's a Biblical-type movie—it's the reverse of 'true' religion, but it is a religious film. There is a god, he's surrounded by his worshippers, he is protected and looked after. The film has the urge to do that, without forcing it down your throat—it just there, and it adds to the overall feel."

Barker was happy to elaborate on Kern's comments. "It's weird, but it does have a sort of Biblical feel," he admitted. "I always think the whole thing about the 'lost tribe' is Biblical anyway, as is the idea of a lost tribe being found and led to safety or salvation—or attempting to, but failing in this particular case. But also because—and this is always true of what I write or do in the movies—there's a kind of religious subtext, an atmospheric thing going on. It's the flange of the morality which usually informs this type of movie, is that the monsters here are the good guys, the creatures are the sympathetic ones. They are humane. And humanity, rep-

resented by priests, cops and analysts—the three forces of authority—are absolutely, unreservedly bastards."

With both McBratton and McBratton, and in many of the stories, Barker features three characters—often leads—who are stranger than the male counterparts. It's certainly true that in *Cubik*, Lori's mother and strength of will gives Rose the courage to carry on. This approach is borne out by Bobby. "The fact that Lori loves Rose and will follow her anywhere, even somewhere like Miami," says even more for her. "I don't think this is just another film where the girl follows the boy—Lori would leave any time she wants to. But Lori is her own person, and she's stronger than she thinks she is at first."

"It's weird, but the film does have a Biblical feel," admits Barker.

She also echoes Barker's statement about the nature of the film's role reversals. "It's not really a horror film in the way you're used to looking at them, and I think it will change the outlook of anyone who sees it. One of the things about it that's so odd is that the normal people—I built to see that

phrase—are so loved. The creatures are very normal, very likable, very warm—and it really hurts when you see what happens to them. But what people don't understand, they fight and try to destroy."

So has Barker made a conscious attempt to focus on the majority's intolerance of minorities? In *Nightbreed* a kind of polemic? Though specifically referring to the gay issue, Barker's reply embodies much of his attitude towards the genre. "Here we've made a non-attempt to make positive forces of various creatures who are usually spat upon in life or in the movies. But particularly I've tried to get at something which I think is the subject of an awful lot of horror and fantasy movies—that the forces of darkness, the things that are supposedly morally repugnant, are the things we really like."

"I think there's much more of an overlap between the things we are supposed to find repulsive and horrible in the movies, like the vampires," Barker continued. "The guy who can pick up girls from across the room, with just a glance, who loves forever, who enjoys the night, who is sensual—there's much more of an overlap between these qualities and the things we actually enjoy. Normally you're supposed to hate those guys, you're supposed to enjoy the fact that they get killed. I've

Continued on page 93

Horror author John Phillip Love (left) and Tapp Spector make costumes appropriate to the tone of the *Nightbreed*.



LITTLE MONSTERS

The monster under the bed finally makes it to the big screen

—By Bill George—

"Good night, Eric."
—click—

The bedroom is instantly black. Nine-year-old Eric then hanges apart on the mattress and prays for morning. The darkness is scary and soon becomes a fertile breeding ground for a youthful imagination. Familiar shapes and sounds suddenly become ominous, threatening. Aside from pulling the covers over his head, Eric has few options. He could call Mom and Dad (Margaret Whitton and Daniel Stern), but they'll offer only a few fleeting moments of comfort and then it's "lights out" again. Besides, they might not hear Eric over their own hawking—their marriage is on the endangered list, along with the household income. Tonight, however, Eric's problems are very tangible, manifested by something under his bed, cloistered within the darkness of his room—for he can't escape. *Little Monsters*, a new entry from Vestron Pictures.



Fortunate director Richard Greenberg and Oscar-winning effects guru Rob Bottin take us on a fantastical journey that begins in a child's mind and ends in a monster underworld.

After discovering a monster under his bed, Eric comes up with his only course of action: challenging his older brother's machismo, he convinces the ever cynical 18-year-old Brian (Fred Savage), who certainly doesn't believe in monsters, to switch bedrooms with him. Brian carries out his own gradual joke to further scare Eric, but then upon returning to his brother's bed realizes that the little guy wasn't just crying wolf. Fearless Brian sets out to tug the creature—or this whatever it is—and succeeds. The two battle to the wardrobe, and before long, the monster Maurice (Howie Mandel) awakens. Brian is accompany him back under the bed beneath the floor boards to his monster world below. The place is everything: Maurice says it would be "no rules or homework,

plenty of games and junk food"—so Brian willfully returns the next night, and the next.

The other monsters, however, aren't too thrilled with Brian's becoming too familiar with them, and mean giant Snack (Rick Dunningham) declares that Brian must now become a monster too and remain in their world forever. Before he or Maurice can protest, Brian already begins undergoing bodily changes and, to top it all off, the men soon attempt to ensure Brian's stay by kidnapping his brother Eric.

With Maurice on his side, Brian returns to the upper world to gather friends (Ted (William Marway Weiss), Rusten (Amber Bartlett) and even young Ronnie (Demi Rattig)) and sets down in brutal fashion to recover his little brother.

In *Little Monsters* an extrapolation of Pinocchio's "Pleasure Island" sequence, delinquent children turned into donkeys, described by William K. Easter as "surely one of the screen's



Paula Clark (Kinnaman) declares that
there must now be only a question of time.





Greenberg's furry kids hardly registered.

subject matters of horror. For *Monsters Squad* with a message? "I wouldn't compare," insists director Richard Greenberg, "it's more of a fable, a tale of passage, than it is a horror movie, although there are elements in it that are scary. It deals with the problems of growing up." Mr. Greenberg is no stranger to fantasy films. He received an Academy Award nomination for his special effects for *Predator*. Greenberg and his brother Robert co-garaged R-Greenberg Associates, a production facility that specializes in a combination of live action, optical effects, computer-generated graphics and animation. Greenberg designed the title sequences for *Superman: The Movie*, *Alien* and *Ghostbusters*, among others, in addition to conceptualizing the successful marketing campaign for *Back to the Future* and the aforementioned *Ghostbusters*. Greenberg is his debut as feature film director, going to stress plot over optical gimmickry.

"I've always had a love about an effects laden film," explains Greenberg, "the ones that really work for me are the films where the effects support the story ideas. And that's what I've tried to do with *Little Monsters*."

Though *Monsters* was tailored as family fare and the cast is dominated by pre-teens, Greenberg is confident that an appeal will not be limited to kiddies. "Number one, it comes off as very real. I think it's something that anybody, at any age, can get involved in. I watched it with an audience where the median age was 28. Greenberg was slated to direct children, in choosing Fred Savage at ABC's *The Wonder Years* because "it's one of the things that made *Little Monsters* a joy to work on. If you find the right kids, ones who haven't fallen into adult mannerisms, they bring special things to the picture."

Short describes Moss as portrayed by 8½ Year-Older Haven Mandel as "the Roman of monsters. Maurice is the macho, brave-but-annoying guy who backs up Brian to 'another dimension' beneath the floor boards. He's some strange kind of combination between a film nocker and today's punker, with a dash of Mandel's un-prompted kind of humor."

In production, the quota of extras answering make up as little monsters echoed Short's original speculations. "We were initially scheduled to make about 20 to 25 different creatures for

the film. But we ended up with so many kids, and different ones, each day, that we just started making them up as we went along. I think we ended up with 40 or 50 different kinds of breeds in the film, all of whom are used in very sparing amounts. They're close or leashed for atmosphere in the back ground." One of the film's principal locations was an abandoned cement plant in North Carolina where temperatures climbed to 100 degrees. In spite of the "insane" heat Short's make-up remained intact through each day of shooting, requiring only minor touch-ups. "Lurch did more damage to the make-up than the rest of the shooting did," recalls Short.

Fred Savage's family retained the opportunity to perform as little man-ans. Savage's real-life brother Ben, who is featured in the supporting role as screen-writing Eric, was "swatched into a couple of scenes in the middle of the film to avoid the monsters." Kate Ford's little sister captured a full applause and head cast for her debut as an extra terrible.

Aside from the film's "tale of passage" metaphor could there be a more sinister message in *Little Monsters*?

"Yes, there are monsters that live under the bed that come out in the middle of the night," warns Robert Short, "so don't dangle your feet or hands over the edge."

Brian and Maurice (Haven Mandel) become close friends.



A special look at the career of one of Hollywood's finest actors

BASIL RATHBONE

He duelled with Robin Hood and Zorro,
matched wits with Moriarty and
 tried to clear the family name of Frankenstein

By Laurence Maslon



Top right: Rathbone as Captain Lawrence in *Captain Blood*. Top left: As the first Sherlock Holmes in *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. Above: Rathbone, Loren Barloff and Prince have a few laughs between takes in *A Comedy of Errors*. Left: Basil as *The Son of Frankenstein*.

Evermore has his fantasy idea of Hollywood Heaven. In it, Peter Cushing chases down Boris Lugosi. Orson Welles plays Nero Wolfe and Donald Duck and Daffy Duck square off with each other—well, some dreams really do come true. In my Hollywood Heaven, the greatest Sherlock Holmes of them all, Basil Rathbone, tracks down the meanest, sleaziest, most villainous villain of all—also played by Basil Rathbone. He was one of those filmmakers who made every film he appeared in special, whether it was as one of literature's greatest heroes, or one of its vilest bad guys. His sharp features, stony voice and impossible

stylizedness made him the first choice to add class to a period picture, and it was in the genres of adventure, suspense and horror films that he made his indelible, regrettably mark.

Rathbone's name was linked with adventure before he was even born: a great uncle of his, Major Frank Rathbone, was in the box with Lincoln the night he was assassinated. Rathbone himself was shocked by John Wilkes Booth as he attempted to restrain the notorious assassin. Dad's life was not without incident, either: Born Philip St. John Basil Rathbone in Johannesburg, South Africa, on June 13, 1893, Rathbone and his family



Left: Rathbone, plus the beautiful Marjorie R. Lawrence, in *A Tale of Two Cities* (left) and *The Adventures of Robin Hood* (right).



Middle: He dated with Flynn in *Captain Jack*.

were struggled out of the country in the dead of night when he was a small child. His father was suspected of being a British spy. Basil grew up in England and gallantly served with the Liverpool Scottish regiment in World War I, enduring some death-defying reconnaissance in the trenches.

Basil Rathbone was first, last, and always an actor. His cousin was a major Shakespearean actor of the pre-War generation and engaged Rathbone for a number of Shakespearean juvenile roles both before and after his service in the First World War. This experience was to have a profound effect on Rathbone, both in his acting and his outlook. For Rathbone was the consummate Edwardian gentleman throughout his life; he was well-read and well-mannered, trained in fencing, singing and dancing, and won Rathbone as Captain Killbane in *The Mark of Zorro*.



viewed that the simple, more traditional ways of life were the best.

In the 1920s, Rathbone became a famous romantic leading man on the British and American stages and reached his zenith as a dashing young man playing Romeo in *Romeo and Juliet* and Robert Browning in *The Boy of Wimpole Street* opposite leg

Begrudgingly, Rathbone went from leading man to character actor.

andary actress Katharine Cornell. His Mercury was the very young Orion Willist. It was while he played Romeo on Broadway in 1934 that he got a call from David O. Selznick to play the part of the first hearted Mr. Mark in one of Selznick's all-star MGM film, *David Copperfield*. As the actor mentioned in his autobiography *In and Out of Character*: "Yes, I must say 'good by' now, from juveniles to real character roles. All my professional life had been earnestly building to this moment." It was indeed a new direction for Rathbone, yet not one he would have entirely predicted.

Anyone who has seen *David Copperfield* will not soon forget Rathbone's performance. Although he was billed second to last among some of the finest character actors in film history, he made an indelible impression. As David Copperfield's stern, unpassionate stepfather, he creates a full-blooded Victorian monster out of the simplest

of means. During the longest scene in which he beats poor little Freddie Bartholomew (the young David), his eyes betray only distance and impassivity—he is many miles removed from that little boy's life. For this performance, he received "good reviews and very heavy box office—all of it thanks!" He had, with one picture, just become one of Hollywood's most reliable horses.

The Hollywood of the 1930s was quite a different place from the Edwardian stage world Rathbone had left behind. It was vigorously American even though there was a small British social enclave of which Rathbone was a center; its idea of a leading man was fairly restrictive, and it was particularly prone to typecasting. An unconventional looking Englishman like Rathbone, however charming, might find himself locked out of the roles he wished to play. And so, rather begrudgingly, Basil Rathbone went from leading man to character actor. But what a character actor! Rathbone made almost 30 more films in the 1930s, brightening every one with his presence and creating some of the most memorable moments in Hollywood's Golden Age.

Selznick next cast Rathbone as the aloof, arrogant Karsten in Grete Garbo's *A Love Affair* (1933). Rathbone portrayed his character as ruthless and cold as ice to almost justify Garbo's adultery.

Basil donned the robes of a statesman in his next role—*Pharos Plateau*—in *The Last Days of Pompeii* (1935). Rathbone portrayed the Roman governor

serious man-of-duty, a man tortured by his guilt for sentencing dozens to death. Rathbone often said that he considered this performance to be "one of the best of his entire career."

The demand for Rathbone continued as he went back to MGM for Selznick's *A Tale Of Two Cities* (1935) playing the heartless Marquis St. Evrémonde, a French aristocrat who seduced the arrogance and cruelty of the time. "Hunger is an indulgence with these gentlemen as the goat is to us."

Rathbone then went over to Warner Brothers to bring his mark of villainy to the swashbuckler, cast as the swarthy French pirate Captain Lorrain in *Captain Blood* (1935). In 1936, Rathbone was chosen by Irving Thalberg to play Tybalt in *Romeo and Juliet*. This was the only film in which he would ever display his talents as a Shakespearean actor. Rathbone's interpretation of Juliet's cousin brought him his first of two Academy Award nominations.

Rathbone continued his freshening by playing an evil homicidal psycho in *Love From a Stranger* (1937) and a deadly Russian communist who threatens to destroy Charles Boyer and Claudette Colbert's new life in *Tamara* (also in 1937). For the next year, he cast his lot with villainhood forever, playing the notorious Sir Guy of Gisbourne (not the Sheriff of Nottingham as often thought) in Warner Brothers' *The Adventures of Robin Hood*. Here Rathbone is given full reign to portray a character of near mythic dimensions. He gets to play aristocratic henchmen, to Claude Rains' Prince John, he gets to count the beautiful Olivia de Havilland (athlough,



Rathbone is a professor who leaves America to inherit his father's legacy in *Son of Frankenstein*. The film also marks Karloff's final outing as the Monster.





...and even the fight with
In *The Spider Man*.

poor man, he seems genuinely and lovingly shy in his anxious adoration, and in what may be the screen's most famous duel, he gets to fight Errol Flynn with sword and dagger.

There's duel to mark the main event in a huge finale at the end of the picture. Rathbone, gorgeously decked out in red, yellow and blue robes, finally gets to fight back at Flynn, who has

been embarrassing him for the previous 90 minutes. Rathbone's attack on Flynn is intensely felt and his swordsmanship has never been more impressive. Leading fight choreographer B. H. Barry had this to say about Rathbone's work: "Rathbone was the first—and perhaps only—film actor to put character behind his fightwork. Most actors, including Flynn, just back about, looking angry. But Rathbone was telling you a story in the way he fought—basically little tricks with the dagger in John Wood tells you all you need to know about his character. And his technical fencing was masterful." Indeed, his fencing was considered to be the best among an entire generation of screen swordsmen. His trainer, Fred Cevena, thought him to be the only actor who could ever compete on an Olympic level.

Rathbone left Warner's to play the convicted King Louis XI in Remond Colman's *Francis Villon* in Paramount's *If I Were King* (1938). He presented a characterization unlike anything he had ever done before and for it he was again nominated for an Academy Award, but this time he unjustly lost

out to Walter Brennan for *Jezebel*. So, Rathbone returned to Warner's to give what was not only one of his best portrayals, but one of his last ones: pathetic performance for a short time. In *Down Street* (1938), he played Brand, a tense WWI flying squadron leader who is forced to descend from the ground, while his dazed and arm-played by Errol Flynn and David Niven. All the glory Rathbone earned a heavy's insistence on doing things by the book with a longing for adventure and a deep unspoken concern for his men. Perhaps it was his own experience in the war, or the fact that his dear younger brother was killed in it, that rooted his performance in a way few films had shown. The movie also establishes a relationship between him and David Crisp, an loyal, befuddled assistant, that would give a very positive clue to a much more important screen relationship to come.

There has been a lot of publicity lately about how 1939 was Rathbone's greatest year. It certainly was. But Rathbone's Rathbone made no films that year, four of which rank among his all-time greats. It was in that year that Rathbone permanently and nobly assumed the mantle of villain by assuming the deed to *Castle Frankenstein* as the hapless heir to modern day's greatest monster in *Son of Frankenstein*.

Universal Pictures is in process to



As a ruthless villain in *Son of Frankenstein*.

carry on the name of their successful horror series, but their previous *Frankenstein*, Colin Clive, had died. They picked a worthy successor in Rathbone. This baroque, atmospheric film opens with the arrival of Frankenstein's monster in the town. Cut to a dagger Rathbone and his wife in their train compartment. He's a university professor who leaves America to inherit his father's legacy. His wife has with—and the audience—straight in this scene, calmly describing how his



father's important work was interrupted because some stupid assistant switched brains "Why," he usually retorts, "tune out of ten people called that moushagen creature of my father's experiments."

"Frankenstein" calls the train and dapper.

This film, which stands somewhat undeservedly in the shadow of its two parents, has a great deal to offer, especially in the first half, thanks to Rathbone's performance. Frankenstein, masterly owner of his father's reputation, tries to make friends with the villagers who merely walk away in as leisure as he addresses them at the train station. Rathbone starts the movie on an even, credible level, as he tries to understand how the father he never knew could have inspired such hatred. He tries to vindicate his father's work, which he clearly thinks is nothing short of miraculous. But Rathbone's path will have its twists and turns, and when Bela Lugosi, as Ygor, shows Rathbone the shuddering form of Boris Karloff (as final film cutting as the Monster), his eyes light up with excitement and temptation. He comes in the

tronic realization that this monster is his brother and, spurred on by his father's reputation (and his genes, no doubt), returns against his better judgment, to bring the monster to life.

That Frankenstein struggle is the heart of the film and Rathbone's performance. Rathbone knows the potential evil involved, and yet, he wants to prove the Frankenstein capacity for genius to

During the 50s, Rathbone turned to TV, a medium he loathed, often spoofing Holmes.

the world. The intensity and pride with which he crosses out the graffiti on his father's tomb which reads "Maker of Monsters" and replaces it with "Maker of Men" is striking and moving. Unfortunately, the film drops Ygor from much to play after the monster's resurrection, except hysterical schlockiness (which he still manages better than Colin Clive). Most of this is due to a screenplay that pretends

out as it fatally splits the focus between Frankenstein, Ygor and the Monster. Karloff himself manages to do a commendable part which was to spell the end of the line as far as characterisation was concerned in the remaining Universal films.

Rathbone never even gets to confront the Monster until the final moment, although he does have a wonderful scene with Lionel Atwill as the police inspector, which was brilliantly parodied in Mel Brooks' Taming Frankenstein. In fact, that film may be the last word on *Son of Frankenstein*, as it is really a comic remake of the earlier film. Gene Wilder's *System of Dö*, and to say, not all that more over the top than Rathbone's by the end of the film, but that's more the fault of the screenplay than Rathbone. Actually, perhaps the final word on the film comes from its original New York Times review, which described it as "so tough that Basil Rathbone plays the sympathetic part." That goes in a pretty good place of how Rathbone was perceived in 1939.

He could have hardly chosen a more

Continued on page 42

YOUR
FAVORITE
CREEPS
TOGETHER
AGAIN!

THE
COMEDY
TERRORS

FROM 1931 TO 1934

THE
1931-1934
JAMES H. HARRIS

JAMES H. HARRIS

THE
1931-1934
JAMES H. HARRIS



THE IMMORTALIZER

The ultimate brain surgery is explored in this gruesome black comedy

By Rick Maer



Dr. Fritz (Charles Hallahan) and Dr. Greg (Ray Ryan) perform their terrible technique

Between heart, liver and kidney transplants, it was only a matter of time before the brain transplant became a reality. Executive Producer Michael London's first feature for Film West Productions, *The Immortalizer* is a tongue-in-cheek, gruesome experiment-run-amok where brains are traded in like Buicks, old folks inhabit young bodies, and the kids are out of luck. Taking the premise that "Youth is wasted on the young," *The Immortalizer* uses the miracles of modern science to set the scales right.

Mad Dr. Devere (Ray Ryan) and his assistant Dr. Fritz (Charles Hallahan) have developed a new scientific technique of surgically transplanting brains. Working with their trusty nurse, played by Melody Patterson (yes, *Wrangler* Jane of TV's *F Troop*), the two begin to turn tidy profits on their remarkable discovery by offering older people the bodies of noble teen college students. For a bundle of a million dollars, they will provide a fresh, young body to any older willing to meet the sale.

There are plenty of old timers anxious for the opportunity to shed their skin—literally—but the volunteer market is quite a bit smaller than expected,

a little slow. To help make up for the shortage, Dr. Devere has two hench men who kidnap kids and bring them onto the fold. Only when they're brought onto the operating table do they realize exactly what's up.

After the brain surgery, the rejuvenated old folks are led upstairs to recuperate from the delicate operations. That leaves two doctors to dispose of old, discarded bodies and young bodies. Mutant kids—whose bodies weren't receptive to the special serum required for the operation—lurch below, fed on the grisly slop from Dr. Devere's lab, turning into what one character calls, "unstoppable, unkillable soldiers."

Greg (Chris Cross), slated for sur-

gery, escapes into town before he's turned into ground chuck. Though the police don't believe his story, an old woman, Agnes (Elaine May) does. She agrees to help Greg out by posing as an elderly woman willing to pay big bucks for a new body.

The subplot involves Dr. Timmons (Steve Jankovic), a new intern at the clinic. Along with the used brain men, Dr. Devere has another trick up his sleeve to seize the young doctor's body for his own. After ascertaining that the doctor's nerves and coordination are suitable to continue his own highly specialized medical tasks, he plans to make the transplant process work for himself.

Just as Dr. Devere is transplanted into young Dr. Timmons, Greg—who was resuscitated—escapes from the basement maze maze, fleeing the mutants in the process. Dr. Devere's assistant, Dr. Fritz, promptly stuffs them down the chute and turns them into chopped liver, he then gets Greg and prepares to send him to his doom. But the machine stops at the last mo-

ment, grinning to a halt. The police arrive to arrest Dr. Dwyer. With the real doctor glassed up?

Unaware that Dwyer has switched bodies with his young assistant, the police arrest the older doctor (steep alive to take the fall), who goes off screaming in fury. "You've got the wrong guy!" The twist ending, three months later, reveals the real Dr. Dwyer—in his new body—preparing medicine in another clinic looking to start up his lucrative trade once again, faithful nurse at his side. Evil triumphs on the end.

Executive producer London, an entertainment lawyer with the rich to get into producing, fell in love with Mark Nelson's wild script and took the jump into production. He hired Joel Bender to direct and a crew of top-flight Hollywood stalwarts to support, including line producer Frederick Wolfelt and cameraman Alan Case. Shooting in Los Angeles, in an area near USC filled with Victorian houses, their goal was to create the feeling of a wealthy small town.

Says Bender, "The film has a good story with a lot of thrills. There are good gross-out scenes—especially the brain operations—but the overall result is more of a suspenseful mystery."

The brain operations—which have left previous audiences pale—are really *The Immortals*'s mystery shots. They were designed with great care under the supervision of FX man John Meakin of St-Augustine's Centers and *From Beyond* fame.

Bender explains how they worked: "We had John create some heads so that we could actually see the inside of the skull. We used real lamb's brains coated with synthetic blood to show the brain operations on screen. The doctors pick up the brain on cottons to make the transplants from one head to the other."

"They're in an operating room with the life support systems going, and from the front we have prosthetic on



Mark Nelson (above) and his pregnant scenes subjects

their foreheads. During the operations, as you watch, it actually appears as though the tops of their heads are being pulled back, flaps of skin being



Headed exposure of Mark Nelson, Bender

pulled over their faces. As the doctors proceed with the operation, it looks as though they're putting their hands into the brains of the patients. Then the brains are transferred, carried in the doctors' bare hands from the donor to the recipient. The discarded lamb brains are then thrown into a silver

basin, later disposed of down a chute. On the set, people were getting into the humor of the scene. People do gag when they see it on the screen, however."

Bender himself has had experience as directing film editor and screen writer. His first feature as director was the hitman *Gas Pump Girls*, which has since become a director's cult classic. Following that came Bender's no-permanent-horror-vestures, *The Awakening*, featuring *Ali* Mr. Child, son of Ruth Warrick, and actress Susan Strasberg. Bender's next picture was, as co-writer, *Tomb Raider*.

Making the move to Los Angeles, Bender worked as director on *The Awakening*. And, a soon-to-be-released teen-musical drama. With *The Immortals*, he found himself with a rare privilege: greater creative control. Bender was now working with a team ready to provide the kind of artistic freedom he had been craving.

As an student of cinematic tradition, Bender earned a definite reward when he approached *The Immortals*' Stuart Gordon. The



FX while John Meakin created gory, marginal sequences

Re-Animator is the first film that came to my mind, he recounts, but I also looked to Alfred Hitchcock's films for inspiration, with their sense of tension and foreboding.

"I think instead of there being a slasher movie where young girls are just dropped up, this is a picture you can have a little fun with, and even identify with the mad doctor and have a good time with the surgery. It's a classic horror film in the sense of *Moscow on the Hills* and some of the Boris Luganov and John Carradine films, such as *The Unearthly*, *Bride of the Monster*, and *Pinnacle of the Body Snatchers*. There's even a 'Dr. Johnson' type character: the ex-wonder who often played monsters with no brain who's one of the monsters kept in the basement, played by a big body builder named Tommy Lamparski. He was pretty frightening."

Bender was delighted with the cast. "They were hard working and dedicated. They really got into the spirit of the project." Among the victims included in the transplants in *Playboy* model Ricki Armstrong, one of one of the most successful of Playboy's "Contest" winners. Rae Holford—the female bodybuilder seen in *Slipstream*—is grotesquely transformed into one of the monsters in the basement, dependent for nourishment on the grub that remains that daily pass through the grinder.

Melody Patterson, as Nurse Blaine, is a true catchback story. The only female in the original *F. Tinseltown* and actress in dozens of popular TV series, Melody has since been pursuing a singing and acting career. She's made one horror film, *Blood and Lace*, a 1971 Philip K. Dick film co-starring Gloria Grahame and Milton Selzer. With *The Inventioner*, the steps in a new direction.

"We had a ball with it," she says, an incredible catchback. "I just saw the picture and I'm very confident. I was a lucky gal to team up with this crew. I loved my role as Nurse Blaine—I modelled her after Nurse Ratched in *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*. She sees Ricki Armstrong's teenage body and thinks 'I want that body.' I think my character was on her third body already! My favorite part was shooting the human surgery scene, where everybody was going, 'Are we having swordsmen for lunch?' During the screening, I was with my girlfriend whose father is a brain surgeon. Even she couldn't look!"

I'm very high on the picture. Joel knows what he was doing and what he was looking for. In one show I've been



Publicity shot: Joel Bender shares a relaxed moment with the cast.

on the director had me doing nothing, but changing my clothes. I didn't get a chance to act, to create—what I was paid to do. I appreciate getting that opportunity on *The Inventioner*. I've seen a lot of pos pos, but after the screening, we all came out saying, 'All right!'

Clarke Landley, in the role of Dr. Price, brought an added expertise to the film. A stuntman, actor, producer,



director, and writer. When someone finally told me what he was doing, two words came to mind: 'amazing.' He was an stranger to blood, too. When the technical advice came, I able to be there during one day of filming. Landley had the opportunity to sharpen up his rusty skills. "I was the only one around with surgical expertise. I wanted to make a look real."

One of the unexpected events during the shooting of the film, Landley recalls, was the arrival of teen gangs.

The house was on a corner in an area controlled by three gangs. I knew the neighborhood, and kept wondering why the gang members hadn't come with their hands out. We got lucky. It turned out, we were on someone's land right in the middle of the three. The prop truck got take some satanism, fire and shotgun blasts, however.

Other than the satanism, the mood on the shoot was high. Director Bender speaks for the cast and crew when he says, "I had a lot more laughs doing this than on other pictures. And it was fun playing with the brains and the blood."

But, more seriously, he is proud of the finished product. "I feel that a film that has imagination and is entertaining, and is done with a little sense of humor can be good, old-fashioned entertainment. I think that's what *The Inventioner* is. I feel that kidnapping is certain, with the threat of evil is a metaphor for kids graduating from school and going out into the real world—a rite of passage. The end result is that the events they face become a catharsis for the characters rather than a negative experience."

Just tell that to the monsters in the basement!

Waste ain't that make very good slasher flicks.



NIGHTBREED

Continued from page 10

always thought there's a chest—I enjoy the monster, and I want them to be an life-affirming as any human beings. What we're making the audience to do is cheer the monster."

Central to *Nightbreed's* concept of human/monstered human monsters is the character of Decker, Bone's psychiatrist, who is ultimately revealed to be a sadistic mass murderer of the highest order. Alternating between a dapper, mild mannered, besuited shrink and a manic, mask wearing slasher in an actor, we've come to regard as the director of some of the last decade's most important horror efforts—none other than David Cronenberg.

How did Barker decide on Cronenberg for the part? "It just hit me like a flash," he replied. "Maybe a Creek had just done *Dead Ringers*, and we hadn't finished casting, so I suggested it to them. They told me I'd have to ask David myself, so I called him and he said 'Yes.'"

enthusiastic about Cronenberg's abilities and suitability for the role. "For me it couldn't be more perfect casting—it's great, great casting for one thing. I don't think I'd realized how good he actually looks until I saw him on film. He looks very chilling—he offers up these wide, sympathetic grins, then they suddenly vanish off his face. He wrote a little speech for himself, which will be very obvious when you see the film—it's absolutely pure, natural Cronenberg."

Cronenberg is equally pleased with his part as the movie, commending the whole picture and Barker's approach to directing. "Clive's very natural on the set, very at ease and at home. He knows what's going on, and is not panicked at all. While you're rehearsing, working something out for the camera, he's always smiling, what you're doing. It's a very easy, natural flow that comes."

"What intrigued him is the whole fi-

gures it's simpler than might be anticipated. I got involved simply because I was asked? No one had ever asked me to play a large role before, and I was flattered—I guess we're all really here in this business? I met Clive in Toronto when he was doing publicity for *Mousetrap* and we got along well. I knew his temperament, on the set would be a lot like mine and that it would be a very friendly atmosphere."

Cronenberg also notes similarities between the *Nightbreed* shoot and the way he works, although he admits that apart from working in the same genre, his and Barker's work shares little in the way of thematic similarities. "I know it was a conscious effort to create the same crew that worked on the *Hydriater* movies and try to keep that going, which reminds me very much of my own method of work. I like to get that continuity. You can feel it when you walk out there—all the rough edges have been rubbed off already. Working with the same people doesn't get you in a rut—I find it just means that your energy goes into the work and there's an affinity about the production that's really nice, and I can feel that here."

Whether it does turn out to be the biggest monster movie ever or not, Barker hopes for two more parts to the story, and is hopeful that *Nightbreed* will create a suitably enticing atmosphere and sympathetic creature to reverse the stereotypical monster routine. "What I'd like to be able to get at is that although the world of the Breed is a bit intimidating at first, it's a world you'd prefer to see survive at the end of the picture—and when it doesn't survive, your hope is that the re-establishment of that society in the second picture will succeed."

Now all that remains to be seen is if the cast and crew's enthusiasm and belief in their project will successfully translate to celluloid.

RATHBONE

Continued from page 10

colloquialism villain to parody, next came Richard III, the protagonist of *Thor of London*, a very intelligent Gothic affair conceived by Rowland V. Lee, the director of *Sins*. The character Richard III, the crook, lacked money, who supposedly murdered his way to the throne in Plantagenet England, had been immortalized by Shakespeare. In fact, Rathbone's cousin Frank Benson had played the part on stage, as had his Romeo-crazy John Barrymore, each to great acclaim. It is a part that courts great fame, but unlike his theatrical predecessors, Rathbone portrays the role with considerable understatement—a choice which makes enormous sense, as Richard must have been perceived as a credible politician in his era, not a bawling psychotic. In fact, perhaps because the actor was intrigued by the

In *Captain Blood*, he brings his mark of villainy to a swashbuckler.

classical dimensions of the part, Rathbone marks Rathbone's greatest film performance.

The film introduces Rathbone in wonderful fashion, he is parting with the current king with a duel, identified only by his armor, noble's accommodations, with an up to black hair emblem on the front. Richard has a partner in handstand by Douglas—Mori, a disheveled executioner played by Boris Karloff. "What a team we make, eh? Crookback and Dragon," remarks Richard. While Richard is fighting courage and loyalty for the pretenders to the throne ahead of him, he is secretly having the man stare warily in his character—quietly and impressively, with the reserve of a man who knows his success is inevitable.

Any actor who wants to learn how best to play the villain should study Rathbone's scene with the Duke of Clarence, Clarence, a calm drunkard, suspects Richard's villainy, and when Richard challenges him to a duel, he lets Clarence choose the weapon. Clarence thinks he can get the best of the actor Richard by choosing malice, his favorite wine. It will be a drink to the death. What makes this scene of interest for horror fans is that Clarence is played by Vincent Price, one of his very first film roles. Price would go on to play Richard in *Kings*



Moriarty (*Michael Moriarty*) later continued his Dark when costarring by Rayburn.

(Continued on page 10)



A quick look at the delights—and the dregs—available in your local video store

SAVAGE DAWN

1985 102 Minutes

Dir: Simon Nuchtern

Str: Lance Henriksen, George Kennedy, Karen Black, Claudio Udy, Richard Lynch

This pseudo-futuristic western starts in the *Mad Max* mold, with motorcycle mayhem, eccentric villains and a lone wolf hero. No denying it's a cliché-lust, but for endless action and cinematic stupidity, you can't find a better candidate on a boring Saturday night with a fridge full of beer.

The lean and mean Stryker (Lance Henriksen, doing a tame Clint Eastwood impression) rides into the dusty townships of his wheelchair-pai, George Kennedy. Both used to be globe-trotting mercenaries, but after retiring Kennedy chose the family life, while Stryker hit the dirtroads on his chopper.

But as is always the case in these level-headedness, the hero arrives just as the town is under siege—this time by a gang of psycho-on wheels named The Savages, most of whom look like MTV rejects with bad perms. With the aid of a tank, these droids take control of the town. Meanwhile, the world-weary Stryker spends most of the running time watching the locals get abused by the biker barbarians while keeping an sympathetic facade. But when he finally swings into action, Stryker proves to be as rusty as rusty razor wire, tough as a two-dollar steak and as explosive as a jalapeno salsa.

Henriksen is a great actor (as proved by performances in *Run DMC* and *Altered*) but there isn't much meat to this role. He simply glares for an hour and then kicks the crap out of everyone in sight. The unsatisfying supporting cast is good for a few laughs, too. Bill Forsyth (the younger dad brother from *Runners Runners*) plays the lead gone, Karen Black is the town's two-faced barroom floozy, and a highlight is seeing Richard Lynch (a former bad guy from *The Sound and the Fury*) had Brown, etc.) in a guest's collar. A favorite moment is when they all the threat

of a Born Again leader to their unknown Sam (Kenny) because he won't shut his trap.

If the direction had been less forced, several potentially powerful sequences wouldn't just lay there like a beached monster. Nevertheless, all the elements for a good schlock fest are here: despicable villains, vengeful good guys and a run-stop barrage of carnage. Though absolutely brainless, it's a good bet for fans of campwestern actioners.

—Steve Fendley

Recommended

ALIEN NATION

1985 94 Minutes

CASTOR

Dir: Graham Baker

Str: James Caan, Mandy Patinkin, Terrence Stamp, Kevin Major Howard

Genetically engineered aliens, constructed for slave labor, have crash-landed on Earth and have been allowed to assimilate among our population. Unfortunately, this intriguing storyline is never fully explored. The on-screen plot is just as transparent as the plot is predictable, and is justified only as a lure for the pre- and co-viewing campaigns.



After *Nelson* is a badly, badly varnished about an old, salty veteran (Caan) and a new, green (Patinkin), not color) alien detective (Patinkin). Both have different motives for trying to crack an alien drug ring. Caan is out to avenge his partner's murder and Patinkin is protect the horrific secrets of his fledgling species.

Caan is very good as the clichéd cop and there is some very amusing dialogue sprinkled throughout. Much

of the expertise between the new partner parodies classic cop routines (i.e., good cop, bad cop). Unfortunably, the aliens (or Newmen, as they are called) don't laugh rather than sympathy—they look like frolicked Potato Heads that have been deprived. And their physical strength and weakness seem to have been determined by script convenience rather than genetics. Both Patinkin (though he tries hard) and Terrence Stamp, as the alien drug lord, are abjectly wasted, hidden under tons of make up.

But somehow this slick production is easily watchable and worth a rent.

—Bruce J. Schmepp

Review omitted

PARTY LINE

1984 90 Minutes

SONY

Dir: William Webb

Str: Lari Garrett, Richard Hatch, Shawn Weatherly, Cate Blackburn, Richard Roundtree

Mrs. Bell's popular dad-a-date hour promotes the book on this big title thriller.

Bored, rich Angelina (Cate Blackburn) calls the 976 party line—starting dates to study the whims of her murderous baby brother, Beth (Lari Garrett). They supplement their deadly phone and games by packing up victims in nightclubs.

As the murders increase, Detective Bridges (Richard Hatch) and prosecuting attorney Stacy Skane (Shawn Weatherly) are called in to investigate. Along with a curious teenager, Jennifer (Patricia Patten), they track the killers to the party line.

Lari Garrett is convincing as the off-the-wall baby brother and Richard Hatch is good as the tough Harry Callahan-like detective. The action backs to a tense climax and the plot is believable enough to make you think before you dial a party line.

—George LaFontaine

Recommended

HALLOWEEN 4

1988 88 Minutes

CHS/FOX

Dir: Dwight Little

St: Donald Pleasence, Danielle Harris, Eile Cornell, Beau Starr

It's been 10 years since Michael Myers gave trick-or-treaters a deathly scare, and as far as we're concerned, it hasn't been long enough. In fact, if his resident insane asylum hadn't decided to move his constant body to a more remote asylum—on All Hallow's Eve, Myers would still be in the same shape we viewers are in by the end of this *Halloween* deep sleep!

In this last-hauser addition, Myers, feeling particularly nostalgic, heads back to his hometown, Haddonfield, determined to do his remaining living relatives—a seven-year-old named James Lyon. En route, he



announces himself by stabbing, dunnobbering and mutilating all the residents and yahoos who cross his path. At least that's what we think he does to them, conspicuously absent from the film are loads of gore and, while we're at it, sex and suspense. We may as well be watching *Halloween III*.

The film's only saving grace is the return of Donald Pleasence as the ever nervous and intuitive Dr. Loomis. No, Pleasence does not have egg on his face (that's bad make-up, though he does have the best to be enhanced of, turning in a very solid performance). Clearly he is the only one who survives this picture. Dwight Little shows a good touch on occasion and the film does have a very slick look. But in trying to clean up its skin and its element, it's lost its key ingredients. A toned-down *Halloween* is like a Bloody Mary without vodka—ugh!

—Jim Vanam

At Your Own Risk

EYES OF FIRE

1985 86 Minutes

Warner Video

Dir: Avery Grossman

St: Dennis Lipscomb, Guy Boyd, Rebecca Stanley, Karlene Crockett

Colonel America, a ruggedly beautiful country whose trees and streams look an all-consuming evil, in the chilling setting for *Eyes of Fire* which meticulously recreates the era's culture, costumes and speech in a surreal thriller that might be described as "Nathans of Hawthorne Meets The Exorcist."

In 1790, the wanton ways of the coming preacher brother (Dennis Lipscomb) get him and his followers sent out of their settlement, to struggle with the menacing wilderness. With the magnificently endowed Leah (Karlene Crockett) to guide them to the "promised land," the God-fearing church discovers a fertile valley. Shawnee warriors refuse to enter the seemingly placid area, and with good reason. It's the collecting place for "a secret blood"—where the life essence of the slain returns here as a demonic child, mind-washed spirits and an elemental witch who gathers

souls into her trunk.

The valley's supernatural vapors provide some of the weirdest and most stunning images to grace the genre in years. Ghosts walk into from a cow skull to pour from mushrooms and a body forms from autumn leaves.

As narrated by a lurid child, the film maintains a lusciously pace that makes its descent into outright terror all the more fearful. Always struggling but never away from the odd characters to catch sunlight leeching from the water or trees shivering under a bloody sky, Grossman manages a complete synthesis of nature and environment that reads such stylistic auteurs as Ridley Scott. And when Leah engages in a psychic fight with the earth witch, *Eyes of Fire* crosses over into a mystical plane, becoming a hypnotic blur of bluish and grey tones. With its gloriously unbelievable climax, Grossman achieves a total aesthetic feat that horror rarely attains. The key to his success lies in the barely touched past, an area that future filmmakers would be wise to explore.

—Daniel Snierson

Highly recommended

MIDNIGHT HOUR

1989 97 Minutes

Video: Entertainment

Dir: Jack Bender

St: Shari Belafonte Harper, Lewis Burton, Lee Montgomery, Dick Van Patten, Kevin McCarthy

Three hundred years ago, in Patchford Cove, a small New England town, the local witchhunter Nathaniel Greenville burned a powerful witch, Lucinda, at the stake. Lucinda placed a curse on the town to raise the local demons, ghosts and sorceries.

Now, three centuries later, Nathaniel Greenville's great-grandson, Phil Greenville (Lewis Burton), and Lucinda's great-granddaughter, Melissa (Shari Belafonte Harper), along with a group of local teenagers, stumble upon an old trunk in the basement of the local Halloween Museum and uncover the scroll of Lucinda's curse to unleash evil spirits.

Needless to say, the teenagers invoke the curse and the demons (and Lucinda herself) come back from the dead to wreak havoc on the citizens of Patchford Cove. Lucinda is vengeful puts the bite on her great-granddaughter, Melissa, who then

rips the neck of her boyfriend (Lewis Burton).

As usual in this kind-of-ha-ha horror flick, good triangles over-ride as the spirits are put back into the earth at the "Midnight Hour."

Nothing about this movie is either scary or funny. It's your typical low-budget horror spoof, trying for a new twist and failing. There's some great film music on the soundtrack, but nostalgia buffs might just as well spend their money on a Golden Oldies album.

—Lorraine LaRocca

Not Recommended

THE SENDER

1983 92 Minutes

Paramount Video

Dir: Roger Christian

St: Kathryn Harrold, Shirley Knight, Zeljko Ivanek, Paul Freeman

Paramount Pictures really screwed up when it came to promoting this film. They made it look like just another one of those Friday the 13th clones, when in fact it's a first-class teleplay thriller.

Its tale starts as a glacial-eyed drifter who tries to commit suicide by taking a one-way stroll into the ocean, but

Instead ends up in a hospital psych ward. Not only is he plagued with amnesia, but he's cursed with a random, uncontrollable form of telepathy, where he's able to place things into others' minds. Soon the renowned Dr. Francis (Mr. Harold) begins thinking of her the one going mad when she starts seeing rats filling her living room, gets run off the road by a phantom pick-up truck and is visited by Francis's little dancing mother.

The hallucinations get progressively important to mention material, and when this John Doe has a simple nightmare the entire hospital goes into it's necessary chaos. The film's use of dream imagery predates *Nightmare on Elm Street* and unlike more recent excursions into this territory, its progression of dreams have an internal logic to them—instead of simply being a showcase for flashy effects and logic. The pacing may be a tad slow for hard-core shockaholics, but that's presumably because the filmmakers sacrifice cheap scares in an effort to develop a mood and flesh out its character (How innovative!).

Director Roger Christian has a fine visual eye-teacher, he worked as art director for *Star Wars* and art decoration for *Alfred*, and the acting is uniformly fine, with French giving a creepy yet tortured portrayal that gradually elicits sympathy from the viewer. An overlooked little gem—not without its slight flaws, but definitely worth a look.

—Steve Potashnik

Highly recommended

INFERNO

1983

Key Video

Dir: Dario Argento
St: Leigh McCloskey, Daria Nicolodi, Alida Valli

The second installment of Dario Argento's unfinished "Three Mothers" trilogy doesn't have Argento's aggressive shock, but maintains an extraordinarily creepy mood that's the stuff of real horror. *Inferno* centers on the most terrible of these unholy mothers, Master Tenebrebrum. A snake-shaped keyhole will unlock her secrets, and anyone who seeks them out—or even suspects the Mother of Darkness' existence—meets a brutal fate.

After receiving a disturbing call from his sister, Mark Leigh McCloskey travels from Rome to her Manhattan apartment, a bizarre structure that an alchemist's torse

labels as the residence from which Tenebrebrum will spread Hell on Earth.

Mark's search for his now vanished sister leads to a series of mysterious vignettes. Apartment dwellers go to check the floor box and are awfully killed, a drowning cripple's mother suddenly drives a cleaver into the cripple's neck. Death is unexpected and without reason, and Argento provides no obvious payoff in which the murderer (or murderers) receive lethal justice. Instead, he offers a terrifying revelation of how the victims have asked to be slain all along.

Characters spend a good deal of time wandering about before getting killed, but Argento turns this amateness into a fascinating dance toward death, creating a surrealistic world where evil freely mingles with the ordinary. One woman goes to a library's basement and ends up in a medieval dungeon, another finds a

decaying body in a submerged room. Physical fears are personified by black cats and sewer vermin, which gather in Central Park during an eclipse to devour an animal foster. With the aid of Marie and Lamberto Bava (Black Sunday, Demons), Argento turns *Inferno* into a repository of great Italian horror techniques, using saturated colors and expressionistic sets to convey a total mood of dread. By slowing his pace, Argento achieves his most powerful vision: set pieces from glistening skulls can match the chilling aspect of a full moon, yellow eyes light up the dark or an animal's grunting fangs.

Never released theatrically by 20th Century Fox and now out of print on Key video, this rarely seen master piece is worth seeking out, but not in dark places.

David Schmeidler

Highly Recommended

LASER UPDATE

For the past several years, laser discs have been slowly warming their way into video collectors' hearts and homes. For best picture and sound quality no other format can rival laser video. In terms of popularity, it still has a long way to go to be competitive with VHS, but discs are surprisingly affordable (\$25-\$40) and to the delight of horror fanatics, hundreds of well-known and thank-God-obscure titles are already—or will be—released on disc.

LV offers a spectacular range of special effects: random access, high speed forward/reverse scans, slow motion, freeze frame, digital sound, CX noise reduction and others. Note that not all discs offer the full spectrum of effects—they are recorded in one of two modes: CAV (constant angular velocity) which offer all effects on specially pressed discs, and the most common, CLV (constant linear velocity), which has limited effects (no freeze frame or slow motion). For those who want all the technical specs and information, you're best off writing to the manufacturers.

Cream of the crop

No collector should be without MCA's "Encore Edition"

Collection. Titles include *Dracula* (restored version), *Son of Dracula*, *Frankenstein* (restored version), *The Bride of Frankenstein*, *The Wolfman*, *Phantoms of the Opera*, *This Island Earth* and others. Side two on all titles in this series is CAV and contains original theatrical trailers and still photographs from the feature or production.

The video parent will delight in the Voyager-Criterion collection. Most titles are in the CAV format and include supplementary sections with both still photographs and audio essays on the second track that may be listened to while watching the film. The original theatrical aspect ratios are maintained for all wide screen films. Titles include *2001: A Space Odyssey*, *The Princess Bride*, *King Kong*, *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, *Forbidden Planet* and *Badly Banned*.



SHOCKER

Continued from page 17

equipment and computer equipment, and Bruce George, who did the special effects for my episodes of the revised *Twilight Zone* series, including *Mr. Pipher's Soul*. He and I had a meeting and he told me, 'Here are the four or five kinds of effects you can achieve with this kind of video system.' And then I sat down and designed shots around those effects. He even showed me things that I had no idea were possible."

One of the latter effects involves using a motion control system to shoot a light between Jonathan and Pipher, who's transparent, while they're inside the same television set at the same time. "The camera is on a hot head that's connected to a computer so that after you finish the scene you shoot the scene again using the same precise moves frame for frame with nobody on the set," Croves explained. "Then you pull a traveling matte off [Mitch] and drop that matte in over the empty set, and you pull out what's behind him as a matte, and suddenly he's transparent. We put into tremendous technical virtuosity moves based on Bruce's knowledge of what was possible. We'll be going back and forth between film and high resolution video techniques. It's fun, it's like going in and out of dreams, only it's television."

So how do you destroy such an omnipotent supervillain?

"Jonathan puts a necktie from his dead girlfriend," announced Croves. "While he's holding it he can see into the television like Pipher. He sets up a live television feed on a studio and then goes into the television and brings Pipher out into that particular room for a reckoning. There's more, but I don't want to reduce the film to its plotline."

Indeed, Croves would rather discuss more weighty matters, such as how the character's race across television—which includes their interacting with a game show, a war documentary and a TV evangelist (Croves is buying rights to documentary footage and creating the other programs himself)—represents the collective unconscious of 20th-century civilization. "I want to create the idea that these two are fighting their way through the back drop of violence in our culture. So you see the atomic blast at Hiroshima, a bloody riot in Vietnam, soldiers using flamethrowers—Jonathan and Pipher are actually in those scenes as they're happening."

The film will involve a tremendous amount of postproduction on behalf of

the extensive opticals—four months' worth, according to Bruce George. Among other tricks, George will devise Pipher's many forms, which change from plastic and transparent to solid with a horizontal flip, just like a TV set with a broken horizontal hold. Post will begin as soon as the film wraps principal photography, as Croves has a mid-September delivery date. Ramey has it that he'll kill Carpenter's regular Halloween slot, since Carpenter isn't scheduled to have his next film ready until 1990.

Deeply touched and clad in a Ray-Gun ensemble, "death row prison outfit" (three needed to create a cleaner matte for special effects purposes), Mitch Pileggi agreed to be interviewed as he dived his chicken and mashed potatoes lunch. While you would certainly think twice about refusing him spare change, at the moment Pileggi doesn't much look the part of the guy who's been drafted to give Freddy a run for his money.

Pileggi was born in Oregon but was raised in various Middle Eastern countries due to his father's job with

The killer has the ability to take over people's bodies to continue his murder spree.

the U.S. Department of Defense. He studied theater in Austin, Texas, and relocated to California at the time he was drafted—a somewhat unfortunate for the *Star Trek* film, *Koppley Alan*. Aside from his work on episodic television, he's appeared in *Twilight of the Loon* (1981), with David Carradine and Scott Wilson, and *Three O'Clock High* (1985), where he played a delinquent high school security guard. His casting in *Shocker*, he said, is an extension of the kind of role for which he has garnered a name: the personification of evil.

"I play bad guys, and this guy is the ultimate bad guy," continued Pileggi. "Whether Freddy is almost a dream image, a fantasy compilation of all

these kinds of ideas of evil, Horace Pipher is a real person, and you see him as a real person. You get an immediate idea as to the reality of his destructive potential."

Having spent several years in the Middle East during times of extreme political unrest, Pileggi has seen his share of violence—beheadings in Saudi Arabia and hangings in Turkey. Among the fun is a chance to exercise his personal demons. "I have a lot of stuff in me that comes out when I act—it's fun to kick out the jams and do these wild things. And Wes is smart; he'll work with me, he tells me if it's not enough, and if it's not enough I give him more. I can give him as much as he wants."

Has Pileggi done any thinking about how Horace Pipher will be received by the teenage audience? Does he envision himself as another pop-culture phenomenon? The actor swallowed a mouthful of vegetables and thought a moment. "I absolutely think Pipher has the potential to be a kick. I certainly think Wes and the producers anticipated him having that effect on the audience. I try not to dwell on things like that, but not be back of my mind I guess. I can foresee Pipher having the kind of popularity that Freddy has enjoyed. At least I hope so—I've already been signed for two more sequels."

Croves is confident that there will be a demand for at least one *Shocker* sequel, though a series of films would be more to his liking. "My only thing about sequels is that they remain fresh and within the true spirit of the original—they shouldn't just be a retread of the first film. *Freddy the 13th* is just the same thing over and over again. When I made my deal I made sure I had merchandising rights—partly the creation of Pipher has been to escape from the shack of having created a character that's produced probably half a billion dollars and in which I have no profit participation to speak of."

Croves is well aware that he may be forced to address the inevitable criticism that, in Pipher, he has brought to



Continued on page 52

BIG BUGS

Continued from page 14

The caterpillar saunters through Tokyo, destroying many hours of modeling work, and is attacked by model planes and tanks before spawning a cocoon on a radio tower. Just when the Japanese think they've killed the thing with an "atomic heat ray," a huge, strangely puppet-like moth emerges, hatching some more models with gusto from its enormous wings. The movie proceeds to Americanize "New Koi's City," creating some havoc there among American extras before picking up the Peanuts for a direct flight to their island.

Part of the appeal of this film is that it doesn't take itself too seriously. The effects range from barely acceptable to laughably bad—straw-stick footages and painted backdrops are only a few offenders. A more malicious *Mothra* proved to be durable enough to be given a role opposite the big green lizard in *Godzilla vs. the Thing* two years later.

Cinematic bug bugs have practically died out since then, an exception being *Empire of the Ants* (1977). Bert I. Gordon only did *Empire* of the Earth (he wrote a screenplay loosely based on an R.G. Wells novel). Apparently, ants in remote areas of Florida intended for development who have been pinging out an radioactive waste have grown to tremendous size. The billionth bugs wage out a few kills there for a real estate party, then herd the rest to a nearby town run by the movie. Reminds there, sprayed with the queen's disgusting aroma, work for the bugs "because they are superior." (For instance, would ants make a movie this bad?) The newcomers manage to break the spell and create general confusion before escaping.

The special effects, a combination of apocalyptic, back-projected live-action ants and models, shows little promise since *TWINS*. The cast of TV actors (Dean Cain as Robert Lemming, John David Carson struggles through a script that lacks much suspense or excitement. Overall, it's hard to show mass enthusiasm for this film than the invasion ants do.

Another AIP/Bert I. Gordon film made a year earlier, *Reel of the Code*, features giant wasps in a prominent role. Also nominatively based on an R.G. Wells story, the story concerns a professional player (George Costanza) and his pals taking *REEL* on a wilderness island. One of them is stung to death by an alien wasp, and it turns out Mrs. Schaefer (in Lupino) knows why. Since she's been feeding her children

some grass that comes out of the ground, resulting in eight-foot high monsters. Of course, some other beetles have gotten into the stuff as well, and along beetle larvae and rats. There's some rickety special effects "one against nature," but the story is pretty bland, and the poor FX, similar to those in *Empire*, can't make the film any more credible.

While giant insect films are their peak in the 50s, normal-size bugs will see their film triumphs 30 years later.



The next part of this article (to appear in *Horrorfan* #4) analyzes what happens when regular bugs get ambitious on-screen. Ants look toward world domination in *Phase IV* (1974), and smarting humans with frighteningly little trouble. Meanwhile, cockroaches get their day in *Bug* (1974), although they're not the kind you'd find in a kitchen cabinet. The killer-bee sub-genre begins with *The Savage Bees* (1974) and ends with *The Swarm* and *The Bee Movie* (1976), and tentacles take over in *The Kingdom of the Spiders* (1977). Normal bugs can also be mutated as deadly murder weapons, whether by a scientist in *The Deadly Bees* or a biological teenager in *Empire* (both 1978).

We'll take a look at bugs from outer space—for instance, in *Five Million Years to Earth* (1968) and *First Men in the Moon* (1964), where advanced in ants cross paths with humans.

Last, we'll investigate one of the most fascinating variations of the genre—humans transforming into ants. *The Fly* (both 1958 and 1986 versions) as well as their sequel explores the concept of a half-man/half ant, an uncomfortable to terrifying effect. Some lesser known transformation films are also included, among them *Journey of the Bee Girl* (1953), *The Way Women* (1958) and *Shed Beast Series* (1966). Meanwhile, keep your can of insecticide nearby. □

"Incredibly, too. The term bug applies specifically to one type of insect, characterized by making night noises."

SHOCKER

Continued from page 14

like another one-dimensional, sick figure maniac who encourages an irresponsible identification in the young audience. Rather than justify his actions, Craven prefers to discuss the appeal of such villains to the target audience. "I think the attraction has to do with the fact that our culture is so steeped in debauchery. It seems to be honest while it lies, it claims to be for real while it plunders—I'm talking about the major forces in our culture, the governing bodies and authority in general. So when we watch a character who is in a position of great authority, the life-giver or taker, and who is absolutely honest, no matter what that honesty involves, it's refreshing. Freddy Krueger or Horror Preter make no pretense about what they stand for—they're out to kill you, period. They're completely unashamed about it—uninhibited, unfiltered feelings. That's their attraction, as well as their terror—no rule applies to them. I know that Freddy has been accused of provoking laughter in the way he kills his victims, but I'm not sure that 95 percent of the audience isn't

Craven was guaranteed complete creative control, including casting and final cut.

laughing instead at the destruction of false images of decency—what's real, what's good and bad. I don't think the kids actually buy these villains as real living beings."

It's difficult to believe that Craven's films output, like that of another scholarly, soft-spoken contemporary, Stuart Gordon, concerns itself with subjects that are so dark and terror filled. "I'm sort of amused by that seeming dichotomy," Craven admitted, laughing. "I think that if you're a quiet, gentle person, there's probably a lot of rage in you that doesn't get expressed. You need an outlet for that. As a person who works, I deal with my dark side the way kids do at Halloween—play with it. I'm terrified by the general tone of this world—it feels to me as if life is a series of life-or-death struggles of the species. This new world is steeped in blood, it's part of the game. So, unless you wrap yourself into a game, you recognize that you're part of it. One of the ways that I can get rid of a little of that tension is to make crazy, violent films where I have a measure of control over that level of madness." □

Dave DeCoteau

Mad scientist/filmmaker Dave DeCoteau is determined to breathe new life into his creation—the sex/horror/thriller genre

FILMS

Dreamscape (1989) *directed*
Creepozoids (1991) *directed*
Sorority Babes in the Slimeball Bowl-A-Rama (1992) *directed*
Nightmare Sisters (1993) *directed*
Assault of the Killer Bimbos (1993) *co-produced*
Lady Avenger (1993) *directed*
American Rampage (1993) *co-directed*
Doctor Alien (1993) *directed*
Deadly Embrace (1993) *executive producer*
Ghost Basher (1993) *executive producer*
Ghost Writer (1994) *executive producer*
Beverly Hills Copsey vs. Murder Weapon (1994) *executive producer*
Cyberpunk vs. Robot Ninja (1994) *executive producer*
Tantalizer (1995) *directed*

By Bill George

Takes like *Assault of the Killer Bimbos* and *Sorority Babes in the Slimeball Bowl-A-Rama* are your first clue: Dave DeCoteau isn't angling for the Irving Thalberg Award or a chance to direct the sequel to *Grease*. His entertainment and commercial success are his goals, he's managed to achieve both, and he's done it fast. Three years ago, he worked in films as one of the crew. Today he's a modern "King of the Bs," often compared to

Roger Corman. Perhaps the most impressive thing about his rise from mascot to mogul is that he's kept his candor and a sense of humor about himself and his work.

Until recently, DeCoteau was a staple of Charles Band's Empire Pictures. Since the company dissolved, he has retained his support and professional association with Band (whose latest project is a film adaptation of *The Pit and the Pendulum*). This year DeCoteau is determined to expand his empire. His busy schedule for early '96 includes *Cyberpunk*; DeCoteau is executive producing the film, directed by J.R. *Aloud Just Does Rock* writer. After serving as pro-

"I shoot just exactly what we need; I don't shoot a lot of fluff."

ducer and executive producer on no less than five films during the past year, DeCoteau will return to the director's chair for *El Malhera*, a "suspense, mystery, thriller" starring his friend and business partner, Linsen Quigley.

HP: Before your debut as a filmmaker, how did you earn a living?

DD: I was a bagel wrangler, a Grafters Service person—I provided the dough nuts and bagels on movie sets. I fed Kathleen Turner and Anthony Perkins for six weeks while they were shooting *Criminals of the Mind*. Eventually, I learned job as production assistant, grip and with electrical type work on sets, props, special effects. I did a little bit of everything in a couple of years, and then I finally needed enough money to get my first movie going. I directed my first film (*Dreamscape*) when I was twenty-four. That film sparked the deal with Empire Pictures. That was probably the best day in my life, when I had the meeting with Charles Band. It took about twenty minutes, and I got a two picture deal even though I had no resume and no reel. He liked me, I liked him. We made movies together, and we still do.

HP: Looking back on the beginning of your career, how would you appraise *Dreamscape* now?



DeCoteau keeps looking out for his *Creepozoids* fans.

DD: *Dreamscape* was an experiment, it was my little film school project, wrapped up in ten days. It was like learning how to do it, and learning how to do it quickly, because I only had ten days to learn a career's worth of information and make a decent movie. It was made on a \$90,000 budget.

HP: The ending of *Dreamscape*—with the abrupt disclosure of a maniac as mental patient—seems like a post-production afterthought. Who was responsible for the cut-out compromise?

DD: Me. I decided to go with kind of a triple twist ending, just for the hell of it, since the film had nothing else to offer.

HP: Clips from your subsequent film, *Creepozoids*, have surfaced on a variety of television shows.

DD: Yeah. *20/20*, *thirtysomething*, *West 57th Street* and *Moviecrossed Thought*. That film has garnered more exposure and continues to get more than any other film I have ever made.

HP: Your films have gotten even more exposure on cable TV, what with broadcasts on USA, Pay Per View.

DD: But, you know, *Creepozoids* and *Sorority Babes in the Slimeball Bowl-A-Rama* did better during their original release, in foreign territories than domestically. We were well received in



Linsens Quigley in *El Malhera*.



British. Crocoponds was number seven on the Top Ten Selling Special charts during the month of its release. The *Unforgettable* was number eight. *Sorcery Babes*, released in the United Kingdom as *The Japs*, did almost as good business as *Crocoponds*.

HP: What's the background of *Sorcery Babes In The Scream!* How did it come, your most unique movie?

DD: Charlie (Barth) wanted, a "little genre" movie to be called *The Japs*. I came in the next day, and read off five story lines. The fifth one was a joke, never intended to be taken seriously, about a little group that was squashed inside a bowling trophy back in the 50s and unleashed upon some sorcery babes and fraternity initiates on *Hell Night*. Charlie had that concept more than any of the other ones, and we decided to go with it.

HP: There's no freestyle chase scene, near the conclusion of *Sorcery Babes*, without music on the soundtrack. Was that intentional or an accidental omission?

DD: The music channel of the entire *Real Seven* did not make it to the analog video master. When you do a final mix on a picture, you mix several on three stripes—the dialogue, the music, and a second effects track. You do the video mastering by taking your film, and your three channels of sound, and putting them onto broadcast-quality one-inch video tape for half-inch duplication. When they transferred the entire show they accidentally forgot to drop the music channel from *Real Seven*, they only transferred two channels, the dialogue and effects. The music's omission ruined the film. Fifteen or twenty thousand copies of the tape went out without the musical channel on *Real Seven*, which is the crime of



DD: Crocoponds features a full-body creature suit for Crocoponds

the film and temporarily had an excellent musical score. I was very upset because *Empire*, at the time, did not let me quality control the cinematic masters. First-time version of *Sorcery Babes* may prefer to ban them from the charts. (Laughs.)

HP: I understood that *Nightmare Sisters*, which features a stellar cast of "Scream Queens" (Lemon Quigley,

"I did a little bit of everything, and finally raised enough money to get my first movie going."

Brinke Stevens, Michelle Bauer) parallels the production of Roger Corman's *The Terror*...

DD: After I shot a movie titled *Early Afternoon*, I had extra film, resources, and cameras left over. Ken Hall wrote a script in six days. I shot *Nightmare Sisters* on four days, on a whim and on a job, out of my own pocket. A lot of people love that film.

HP: Which of your pre-*Doctor Alien* (1988) films is your favorite?

DD: I have to admit, I have this bizarre affection for *Crocoponds*. I don't know what it is but when I was making that film I really took it deadly serious and expected it to be a lot better than it was. The reviews have been horrible, but—God!—every time I show it to somebody, they kind of like, and it's certainly a serious attempt, whereas all the other films we've been doing seem to be a little campy or silly.

HP: Didn't *Crocoponds* get positive reviews in Europe?

DD: Excellent reviews! The United Kingdom is asking for a sequel and they're ready to cut a check to finance it. Unfortunately, I don't have the sequel rights to that film, so I probably won't do it.

HP: Who are your movies made for—the critics or the public?

DD: Neither. I make movies for myself. I've got to like what I do and I've got to do it as well as I can. If other people like what I like, then, great. If you try and make a cult film, it won't be a cult film. If you try to make a critically acclaimed film, it won't be acritically acclaimed film. Just make the film that you like to make, and make it as well as you can.

HP: You made some of your past films for under \$200,000. What was the budget on *Doctor Alien*?

DD: About \$400,000. It's a home video, a damn good example of direct-to-video product. I love it. It's a very entertaining film for me, and everyone seems to enjoy it. The only problem about not releasing it the normal way is that it is a comedy, and comedies work very well with large audiences. I'm going to screen it for the Science Fiction Academy here, and for a few other people.

HP: Your next film was *Deadly Embrace*. What is your personal opinion of it?

DD: *Deadly Embrace*...I hate to say it—about the worst film I ever made. But it has made me more money than all of my films combined. It just goes to show you (laughs). What happened with that film is that I had hired a director to direct *Deadly Embrace*, a suspense thriller that was supposed to star Troy Donahue. The director had a very limited shooting schedule. He had only directed short films and a



couple of cable specials. He had a good eye and I thought he would be appropriate to direct this picture. I can't say one thing to him, and Ty Randall, who was in *Amusement* (called as Winston Taylor Randall) and Jack Carter. I had a fairly decent cast. A day before we started shooting, my director changed, he literally just completely froze on me. We were in the middle of rehearsal, we were very close to shooting, and he just couldn't talk. He couldn't communicate with the crew, he didn't know what he wanted or was thinking. We were actually about 40 hours away from shooting, and here this guy was basically unprepared and terrified. I tried to handle him with care but, unfortunately,



The FX crew gets the tapeworm for the *Severely Subliminal*.

anyway. I had to let it go. And I had to direct the picture myself. The directing credit (Ellen Corbett) in my pseudonym. We ended up getting Jim Michael Vincent to star in that last episode, which basically put the film from like a "D" level direct-to-video to like a "B+" level direct-to-video. I did incredibly well internationally, with Jim Michael's name. It's a very interesting, bizarre, psychological, sexy suspense thriller but just a little on even. The script is very weak. I didn't have the chance to do my own director's rewrite. I was unprepared because I had to stop right in, and I didn't have enough of a chance to plan out my shots and do my own work. I ended up with a very, very mediocre movie.

HF: Was your next film, *Ghetto Master*, produced on a much more lavish budget?

DD: No, that one was just under \$400,000 and it starred Richard Hatch, Richard Jeacock, R.G. Armstrong and Rose Marie. It's basically a gang adventure picture that I strictly produced; I was a producer for the on that film. It was a real tough experience because we actually shot the movie in the south central L.A. "war zone." We drove by shootings were happening only blocks away from where we were staging our phony drive-by shootings. It was scary, but we had enough cops with us so there wasn't a problem.

HF: With the exception of your first film, *Dreamscape*, your movies have avoided the "too explicit violence" syndrome. Did you consciously reject this routine premise?

DD: Yeah. Women are not victims in my films. A female victim in my films is very, very rare. Women are the aggressors in my movies, they're the ones who save the day. Look at *Lemon Quesadilla*, *Shower*, *Babes*, she never showed a nipple and she kicked ass, and she saved the day.

HF: And, notably notwithstanding, the *Nightmare* Sisters were not punished for their roles as sexual aggressors.

DD: Exactly. As for *Dreamscape*, which was kind of an awful film anyway, you have to remember that all of the females and the victims in that film were men. The real strong characters, scenes in my films belong to women. Women appreciate that. That's why I have a co-producer now who is a woman, her name is Lenore Quigley (co-producer and star of *Severely Subliminal*, *Chucky*, aka *Murder Weapon*). The nudity in my films usually doesn't have a lot of sexual content, unlike *Anacle of the Kiffer Brothers*, where you see a girl walking around with her breasts hanging out. However, I believe the procedure, it's the only way I can survive in this business, being a bit lewd and com-



HF: How do you manage to stretch so much production value out of a meager budget?

DD: I like to shoot less. I shoot just exactly what we need, I don't shoot a lot of stuff and I don't have a lot of people who stand around and do nothing. And we make a lot of deals on location, and make the whole process of the film much easier than the usual. It's a lot of fun to make movies with us.

HF: Why did you choose a more mainstream celebrity—Judy Landreau—for *Doctor Alien* and *Ghost Writer*?

DD: When we were casting for the *Doctor Alien* role of Mr. Kenakin, we wanted to go with a Mary Warren-type. Well, we auditioned hundreds of Mary Warrens, Barbara Steele and Candice Moore types, and we realized it just didn't work, the way it was written... it wasn't funny. So I said, "Let's bring Judy in for a look." I just wanted to meet the girl. She came in with the scenes memorized and gave us a reading, and we were falling on the floor laughing our heads off. She played it so wonderful, and so funny, that she was perfect for the part.

HF: What is your personal recipe for a quality "exploitation" movie?

DD: Number one, never have the audience. Number two, shoot a lot of different angles so there's a lot of coverage, and keep the editing quick. Number three, make sure the guys look as terrific as the women do, because there are girls that like to watch these movies, too. Make the movies as sexy as possible. Number four, very cooperative production value. Try to work in a car chase, even though that sounds cliché, because they're always fun to watch. An action chase is good, too. Always try to work in some sort of shower sequence, they always sell. Try to fit a blonde in there, because blondes do well in Japan. Don't really show the blood and guts, always hint at it and maybe show a couple of guys, but don't really show a lot, you end up having to cut that stuff out for all the territories that will pay big for your film (without the violence). Have a lot of well-known on-screen stars, get a lot of songs, have an off-screen radio playing if the scene warrants it. Make sure your lighting is not too dark, try to keep it as bright as possible. □

"Every shot in a low-budget movie is a compromise. You just don't have the time to set it up right."

surely what people want nowadays. They want to see it up front, in their face, whether it's violence or nudity.

HF: Your movies made Lenore Quigley the premiere "Screen Queen." How would you describe your working rapport with Lenore?

DD: Lenore and I are buddies. There's nothing between us other than friendship, she's like my sister. We've done over half a dozen movies together during a period of almost two and a half years. We're very, very close as friends, we talk about everything together. She's wonderful to work with, she's professional, she's very spunky and reliable.

HF: What separates your direct-to-video movies from the usual junk on the market?

DD: I usually insert a lot more in production value. They're shot in Los Angeles with incredible crews and I've got "name" actors in my films. My pictures deliver the T&A, action and special effects.

PREVIEW

MARTIANS!!



"The Martian" is a comedy, sci-fi, and survival story.

A rebroadcast of Orson Welles' infamous *War of the Worlds* confuses real-life Martians into attacking the Earth in this new sci-fi/comedy

1938 may be remembered as the year of the Martians. After an aborted attempt to make a remake of *The War of the Worlds* with George Romero, Paramount ordered a syndicated television series which is currently on the air. The H.G. Wells novel that started it all will soon be falling into public domain, and Paramount, which owns the film rights, wanted to beat out any potential competitor. Arnold Schwarzenegger's thriller *Total Recall* is set on Mars. The great science-fiction and mystery writer Fredric Brown has led his comic novel, *Martians Go Home*, optioned to be made into a film. Not to be left out of the pack, Smart Egg Releasing Company is distributing their recently completed film, *Martians!!*, which owes nothing to the previous Martian endeavors except for a tie to Orson Welles' infamous radio broadcast.



Dean Cain/Doug Barry is the victim of his daughter's Halloween prank.

Martians!! is co-written by former special effects wizard Patrick Reed Johnson, who was the film's director, and Scott Alexander, art director on the project. The film stars veteran television actor Doug Barry (*The Fall Guy*, *The Wizard*), masterly character actor Royal Dano (*House M.D.*, *Killer Women from Outer Space*) and Ariana Richards. The special visual effects are being masterminded by Starlight Effects, headed by John Knoll of Industrial Light and Magic, while Johnson and John Crowell, who worked on

Star Trek V and *Elm Street IV*, have created the film's Martians.

The production designer on the film is Tony Tremblay, who has been the visual effects art director on such films as *Remo III*, *Elm Street III* and *2012 EVIL*. According to Tremblay, director Johnson "wanted the Martians to have a real World War II type of look. Their weapons and all their equipment had a very dated, very stylized look. A lot of the stuff is very similar to actual World War II weaponry, including the paint schemes. We used a lot of olive drab and forest green and other camouflage type paint, and we carried in the rust color from Mars. It was really a nice blend of World War II and Martian motifs."

"There is a twist to everything. Just when there's a tender moment, something wacky happens."

Tremblay's major projects on the film were designing the spaceship the Martians arrive on, a menacing, jellyfish-like Enforcer drone, and other assorted paraphernalia. Made on a low budget, *Martians!!* also can play such time-worn techniques as using hanging miniatures—three-dimensional objects suspended before the camera lens that are used to create the illusion of grandeur or a vast expanse.

One of the things that the Martians bring with them is Spiff. Explained co-writer Alexander, "It's a tribute to the comic strip Calvin and Hobbes. He [Calvin] depicts his Spaceman Spiff. We have a little alien who is able to curl up into a ball and travel. Spiff is



actually a little robot—he is shot out of a device known as 'Scout in a Can,' which looks like a bag party popper. It's something they take from their portable 'World Domination Kit.' Large shoot-out of the bottom of the ball, and then it splits open at the waist and becomes this cute little figure. Arms unfold and the top half becomes its head and it looks like a little person. He turns out to be the hero of the show—or one of them, anyway."

Alexander became involved on the project after Johnson had impressed the producers of *Dead Heat*, which Johnson was special visual effects supervisor and second unit director. The producers wanted to know what else he had that might be a viable project. Johnson had written a scenario for *Martians!!* with John Lee, who was unavailable, and so he asked Alexander to collaborate on a script.

Alexander recalled, "We had to move the original story to the present because the original story took place back in 1938. For reasons of economy typical of a low budget picture, we set it in the present day, which actually turned out to work a lot better. In 1938, you didn't have the technology of tele-



Hinsky attempts to lift Wrenchmoller's spirits.

vision where you can broadcast to an entire town a visual image when the Martians invade. This broadcast is pretty crucial because it really tells the town finally that yes, there are Martians, and here they are on the TV sets at Ed's TV and Supply. Then they throwaway off ramp gets blown up."

Back measuring and remount, the Martians in *Martians!!* conform to the basic authority of "little green men." Said Alexander, "They weren't just going to be green, because that's the joke,

I continued on page 68

RATHBONE

Continued from page 47

Carmen's 1932 remake of the film. His content—not for Clarence, and certainly not for Vincent. After the two have tossed back and sloshed about countless flagons of wine, Rathbone drops his face on the table as Prince snars with victorious laughter. But then, one of Rathbone's eyes slowly opens, like a valedictorian, then the other, flashing a vengeful wrath. He drinks another flagon down, silencing Prince, and with one quivering finger, points to a large vat of molteny Karloff appears and drinks the unfortunate Prince head first into the stuff. As his last gurgle is heard, Rathbone slumps against the vat. "He asked for muley 'y," rumbles Rathbone. Vincent Price and years later that "Easi! gave an excellent performance and in the light of modern research on the subject, was probably more correct in his interpretation of Richard than either Laurence Olivier myself."

This film is great fun, although it's neither a true horror film nor a true history film. It's definitely an interesting idea to treat Shakespeare's play as a melodrama, and it certainly convinces me that Rathbone could have given a very persuasive performance of the Bard's Richard III.

What happened next to Rathbone was a stroke of infernal genius, if not one stroke immortalized him and forever altered his career. He was cast as Sherlock Holmes. It took no great genius to see it coming: he had played detective Phobos Vance in a 1930 film, he looked for all the world like Holmes in *Round the Bend*, he had a Holmes-Watson relationship with Donald Crisp in *More Patrol*. But it all came together in Fox's 1939 film of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. The idea of casting a well-known villain as Holmes was perhaps a risk, although Rathbone owed a great deal out of Holmes' less attractive qualities. The fact that Fox billed Rathbone under the actor playing Sir Henry Baskerville—Richard Greene—although Rathbone had received top billing in his previous two films suggests that the studio had dubious hopes for its success. But it was a great success, surely the best of the Rathbone Holmes movies.

His managers to portray Holmes' intellectual absorption, his blend of cold detachment and affection in Watson (played, of course, by the ever reliable Nigel Bruce), his flair for adventure and even, in the surprising final bow "Oh, Watson, the needle," his cocaine addiction. But Rathbone's success as

Holmes was clearly written in the stars. In many ways, he and Holmes both were Edwardian gentlemen at heart, both had a wide variety of skills, both men grew loved easily, both were incomparable in their professions and both men felt a slight condescension towards the world (although in Holmes it was more marked, of course).

Certainly, as the films went on, Rathbone betrayed more and more impatience with the character. The other Holmes film of 1939, *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, is really a good deal less than the sum of its parts. It has some wonderful moments, such as the scene where Holmes sings/monologues a Cockney song-and-dance man, demonstrating Rathbone's considerable skill at music and dance, but there is no real plot and precious little detecting. Of course, it is preferable over the next 12 films, all updated to the 1940s



and shot rather cheaply as the same Universal sound studios where villagers chased down monsters and werewolves. The Universal Holmes films are of considerable disappointment to Holmes fans. Rathbone, trading in his deerslayer for an assassin before that looks like a trend here, is clearly at his wits' end. But some of these films, *The Spider Woman* (1944), with Gale Sondergaard as a female Moriarty helping richly insured men to commit suicide with the help of a spider, *The Scarlet Claw* (1944), a Howard trained set in Canada, *Port of Death* (1944) a mystery thriller with homicidal horses killing his victims by breaking their backs and *The House of Fear* (1944), a gruesome little mystery, can hold their own quite nicely, both as horror films and as Holmes adventures.

A discussion of Rathbone's Holmes would take another article entirely, but the role's effect on his career is best summed up by Rathbone himself: "I was deeply concerned with the problem of being 'typed,' more completely 'typed' than any other classic actor has ever been or ever will be again. My 50 roles in 33 plays of Shakespeare, my

years in the London and New York theaters, my scores of motion pictures, including my two Academy Award nominations, were slowly but surely sinking into oblivion, and there was nothing I could do about it." A long term contrast, not *Frankenstein* Moriarty, had finally trapped Sherlock Holmes. His performance gets more begrudging and resentful as the series went on, and, again, Rathbone puts it best: "My first picture [Howard] was at it, worse, a negative from which I merely continued to produce endless portions of the same photograph."

His portrayal of Holmes was not limited to film, either. During the period of 1940-1946, Rathbone and Bruce recorded over 200 radio programs, also due to a long term contract. With his mellifluous voice and measured dramatic intonations, Rathbone was a natural for radio and, indeed, that medium gave him a considerable portion of his fame and relative success. It was radio that afforded Rathbone the chance to play one of the great horror parts: the Phantom of the Opera, the Los Radio Theatre, hosted by Carl E. De Mille, was known for producing radio adaptations of current films. Claude Rains was not interested in reprising his 1943 film role, so Rathbone, eager for a chance to do something non-Holmesian, leapt at the chance. The performance, available on compact disc, was excellent: one Rathbone essentially has to play two parts, the gothic villain and Ercole Candiani and the deformed man; he becomes—the Phantom. Rathbone manages the sympathetic tones at the beginning, and assumes a frightening, damaged garb as the Phantom—his own words and manner. The recording is a treat for horror fans and suggests that if Universal hadn't hounded Rathbone to Holmes-dom, it could have provided him with one of his greatest roles. Imagine Rathbone, his famous features tantalizingly concealed by a mask, swinging about in a cape body. Lagoon were a cape better, saving swag of a chandelier?

In 1948, Rathbone appeared as his last great swordbuckling villain in *The Mark of Zorro*. Captain Rathbone Panguale could be considered one of Rathbone's finest screen villains. A buxom, cutting man of steel, he might have shared even Sir Tupp him self. The dramatic duel between Basil and Tyrone Power remains one of the great fencing scenes of all time.

Before he went on to do the Holmes series at Universal, Rathbone appeared as the *Mad Doctor* (1941). He plays a physician who murders wealthy women and then murders them.

Continued on page 50

MARTIANS!!!

From our special feature, page 57

but their colonization was going to be like watermelon." He described the characters of the Martians (who, unlike those in many previous science films, do have separate individual personalities) as follows: "There's Captain Ripley, who's modeled after the character Don Corleone from *Saturday Night Live*. He's not quite the liar and not quite the master thespian, but a cross between the two.

"We have Commander Giggwag, who is basically John Cusack in *Man on the Moon*. The next one down the line would be Blamcoe, who is a pilot, and he is like Jack Nicholson in space. He waxes shades constantly and has got this dry sense of humor that reflects the situation in no uncertain terms. He can turn things up in three or four words, whereas everybody else is running around with his head cut off.

"We have Dr. Zepkow, who is basically your Spock character, though we didn't copy Spock. We needed somebody who had a lot of knowledge, so we finally settled on a cross between Carl Sagan and Peter Graves. And then there's Pita, who is the littlest and the youngest of the Martians. He's the one who just loses control, not necessarily be-

cause he's panicked, but because that's his nature. He's modeled after an actor known as Eddie Deenan, as well as Jerry Lewis, but he's not a stumbler—he's actually quite intelligent."

The people who will do the Martian voices haven't been selected as of this writing, but Alexander promises that the voices will reflect their personalities, and he's hoping that some big-time celebrities can be enticed to participate. The main human characters are Sam and Kelly Hoxley (Doug Barr and Aurora Richards), who off and on

Both menacing and comical, the Martians conform to the basic archetype of "little green men."

daughter who have just moved to Big Bear, Illinois, and old man Wewalk muller (Royal Dano), a former who has been down on his luck for quite some time. There are also numerous kids dressed up for Halloween, an evil, scheming banker and assorted town oddballs.

According to Alexander, when the Martians first arrive on Earth, "Blamcoe is really confused because the ap-

nal that they got was supposed to be coming from Australia, where there's a war going on, but instead the signal came from Earth. They hear it as a commercial radio broadcast in replay of the *Welles* broadcast that Mars is attacking Earth, so they head to Earth.

"Blamcoe, who is intercepting this message asks, 'Why would Mars want to attack Earth?' We get our best TV programs from these guys." Then Giggwag chimes in, "Yes, but they've also bombarded us with Robin Leach." He looks a bit and says, "They've got this name" for quite some time.

"As he's leaving the shop, Blamcoe asks, 'I still don't understand why Mars would attack the puny, insignificant forces of Earth.' You can hear the broadcast in the background where people are dying by the handful. They realize what's going on and start laughing 'Because we'd win!' And that's the reason they're attacking Earth. Also, there's a suggestion that Blamcoe has been ordering stuff from the books of comic books from Earth, leaving open the question of who has been supplying him with comic books in the first place. There are all kinds of little jokes and details that people can look for in the film. Somelody [from Mars] has been to Earth before."

(Continued on page 68)



SUBSCRIBE TO *HORRORFAN* Get 14% off and a special bonus!

Don't risk a sell-out at your local newsstand—get each issue of *HF* delivered right to your door! Chock full of up-to-the-minute previews, nostal-



gic retrospectives and insightful interviews, *HF* sets the standard for what a horror mag should be!

Not only will you get fun, exciting, individually packaged issues, but a special bonus as well! For a limited time only, charter subscribers will receive a mini-poster from Freddy Krueger's latest, *Nightmare on Elm Street 5* (not available in stores). So what are you waiting for?

If you do not wish to cut out the coupon, please send in form (plus third class) as a separate note or index card, or use a photocopy of the coupon.

Picture of the featured author and cover photo only.

Mail to: **HORRORFAN Subscriptions**

GCH Publishing, 888 Seventh Avenue, NY NY 10106

14% OFF

Enclosed is my check or money order for \$12.00 (Canadian residents add \$3.00). Please enter my subscription for four issues of *HORRORFAN*. These checks payable to: GCH Publishing/HORRORFAN.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

STATE _____

ZIP _____

Please allow 4-6 weeks for delivery.

NICOTERO

(Continued from page 27)

Show when Lance's chest splits open, and he tries to prevent his heart from leaping out. The MPAA killed it. But it's a dream sequence and, unlike *Requiem for a Dream*, it does not transpire in the movie's reality. What's really perplexing—and even frightening—is the Board's reaction to the opening scene in *Murder Show*: Bruce James is proving a meat cleaver to a little girl's throat. He warns Lance to "drop the gun or I'll gut the little bitch." James promptly chops the little girl's head off, and tosses the severed head at Lance. The MPAA actually had no problem with this particular scene—they approved it!

Just as the Board was finally prepared to pass *Murder Show* with an "R" rating, their commander-in-chief flew to Los Angeles from New York to sit in on a screening. He had a what-if, and demanded even more cuts. The MPAA clearly doesn't understand the genre. Somebody walking into a theater to see *Murder Show* knows damn well what to expect, including current state-of-the-art special effects. Movies are movies, whether the customer's demand is to spend two hours laughing at a comedy or being scared stiff at a horror film. Obviously, nobody wanted to see *Armageddon*, a recently released box office bust about a freeway killer, because California residents are accustomed to the reality of freeway killers. Something else the Board can't comprehend is that many of these horror films are actually black comedies, often, the cuts blunt the purchase of the joke, and the censorship turns the comic intent into something totally pointless and malicious. There's a scene that serves as an example, it's not disturbing, but played for laughs through exaggeration. It's a near-apocalyptic premise, and you wonder how this guy can survive those sound-of-voles. The MPAA, however, cut the sequence in half, with the funeral element left in the cutting room floor, the remaining footage now looks more realistic and sinister than humorous.

Concerning horror films may be compared to removing the most significant pieces of a puzzle game, often, you're left with only a fragmented version of an artist's message at. Even when a courageous distributor releases a film in tact and uncensored, the public misinterprets the self-imposed "X" as pornography, print and media ads are refused in many cities. Unless an alternate rating ("V" for violence) is established exclusively for horror films, it's a no-win situation. □

RATHBONE

(Continued from page 28)

Rathbone was uncomfortable in the mystery/drama *The Masked Girl* (1941), which revolved around a murderer knocking off the greedy heirs in the family mansion. *Phogus in The Window* (1942) saw Rathbone play a famous surgeon. In *Frankenstein's Crew* (1944), Rathbone played the repulsive Lord Frankenstein, established to death by Joan Fontaine.

But Rathbone could only decide not to re-sign his Holmes contract in 1947, a sadly sad to New York to try his luck again at the Broadway stage. The next few years were to be mangled and fruitless. He did play an engaging French crime master in *Reveries in 1948* and narrated Dwayne's "Word in the Willow" segment of *Adventures of Mr. Toot* (1949). He was able to score a Broadway triumph as Dr. Slop in *The Newer in 1947*. When, after several aborted stage efforts (his wife successfully wrote a Holmes vehicle for him), he returned to Hollywood, it was pretty much on a new era and in a new role as a party to put on.

His work as Holmes had undoubtedly kept him from playing better parts, and Hollywood hadn't quite embraced as nostalgic affection for actors of previous generations. Inexpensive casting was out of the question, and Rathbone was called upon to provide mostly cerebral contributions. Some of these efforts were very engaging: He played a villain and fleeing master in *Crime (again) in the Night* (1954). Rathbone got even more comic mileage out of his ill career in *Danny Kaye's The Court Jester* (1954). Here he plays the evil Lord Haverham, clearly Sir Guy of Guisborne twenty years later. He is a wonderful comic partner for Kaye, and no one ever snarled "Not so fast," but rather "What's most astonishing is how terrible, extended sword duel with Kaye—he is so exciting and like an ever.

During this period, he turned to television, a medium he loathed, often spoofing Holmes. He did get to play Sarge on two occasions. But he also recorded several important pieces of literature for posterity for Goodson Records. The best of these are his readings of Edgar Allan Poe's short stories of mystery and the imagination. He was a natural for Poe's work and these recordings belong in every horror fan's sound library.

Roger Carmichael must have seen Rathbone's Poe-trait, albeit a day late and a dollar short. He cast Rathbone in a small but effective part in his 1952

Poe compendium, *Tales of Terror*. Here he plays Carmichael, a dramatic Melodist, who tries to save Vincent Price into the lands of the dead. There was a terrific moment when Rathbone is summoned to Price's deathbed and he bolts out of the chair with a volcanic fervor. He is given more to do (and, in fact, is the best thing in the picture) in Carmichael's halfhearted black comedy, *The Comedy of Terrors*, the following year. Here he plays an aging landlord consumed with Shakespeare who is prematurely reincarnated by Price and Peter Lorre. He gets to act with Shakespearean panache and even forces Lorre with a fire poker as he spouts lines from *Macbeth*. He is obviously enjoying himself, a rare occurrence in his final films. One can't help but be easily struck by the fact that had Rathbone been ten years younger, he would have been the natural heir to helm Carmichael's Poe film. Not to detract from Vincent Price, but

Rathbone's success as Sherlock Holmes was clearly written in the stars.

Rathbone had a true demeanor and style for Poe. He even resembled the writer! Imagine what Rathbone would have done with *Katerin's House* and *Prince Prospero*? He would have brought a real combination of charm and wit to the screen.

Unfortunately for Rathbone, the films of his final four years were disastrous, a dumping ground for old horror stars. The handwriting was on the wall (and everything else was off the wall) in the 1954 film, *The Black Sleep*, in which he played a Victorian scientist experimenting in human surgery. The film manages to waste Bela Lugosi, Lon Chaney, John Carradine and Teri Johnson as well, but it takes its greatest toll on poor Basil. He obviously despises having to make this ninth-rate star. There was probably never a sorrier end to a glorious acting career than his 1957 *Melody* in a *Haunted House*. This film, a disaster of mind-bogglingly morose proportions, casts Rathbone, John Carradine and Lon Chaney as rebellious energy agents opposing monks a "haunted" house. "But, we need to spend the night," complains one of the titular intelligents, "we have to go to Nashville for the Jackboots." A short time after *House's* release, Rathbone died of a heart attack in his New York home on July 21, 1957. He was 75.

(Continued on page 29)

THE ABYSS

Continued from page 23

not one where we're trying to simulate an aquatic environment. You'll notice in the other films that when they show people interacting with water, in what's supposed to be the ocean floor, they're always shown walking. You don't see bubbles. In *Abyss* they even went so far as to add a line in the script that explains that they're using 're-breathers,' which don't produce bubbles. In our film you'll be able to see real air bubbles coming out of the actors' dive helmets. And when the characters are in jeopardy you'll really get a sense of what they're going through—because you'll know that they're actually underwater, which is dangerous to begin with. We wanted to be able to say that we did it as close to reality as possible, even though we weren't actually 1,000 feet down."

Ed Harris (the upstart oil man in the film as Bud Brigman, ex-fellow of a married underwater oil-drilling habit called Deepcore that lies 2,000 feet below the Caribbean. When the hull of the massive submarine USS *Antares* is disabled in 2,000 feet of water at the brink of the Cayman Trough, Brigman is ordered on a rescue mission—despite the fact that his men (others: Capt. Kaid Bremer, Jr., Leo Burmester, Todd Greff, John Bedford Lloyd, J.G. Quinn and Kimberly Scott) are a motley crew of blue-collar types who clearly aren't cut out to be heroes.

To give them professional assistance, the Navy sends in four SEALs (Sea, Air and Land specialists)—played by George Robert Kluge, Chris



Kiefer Murphy, Adam Nelson and Michael Biehn of *The Terminator*—who are locked upon by the Deepcore riggers with the kind of doggedness usually reserved for a gun rivalry. An additional note of demand is introduced when project engineer Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio (recently seen as Kevin Kline's love interest in *January Man*) travels down to Deepcore. A series of incidents traps the lingering crew in the abyss where the surface sub is located, and it is there that a remarkable discovery is made (the violent alien? an old Jackson Browne T-shirt?)

Everyone connected with *The Abyss* is being robotically tight-lipped about its plot. Cost and crew were required to sign nondisclosure agreements so that the film's alien element would not be leaked to the press before the film's opening. Heard sees nothing

about James Cameron giving three tons of underwater to his cast riding on the back of the submarine. He told, "Left Bud Brigman (Ed Harris) as he tries to stay ahead of the surging water. Below left, Captain (Leo Burmester) assistant ordered Monk (Adam Nelson) out of a burning module while Lindsey Bergman (Mastrantonio) sprays them protectively with water."

unusual about such a protective measure. "It's becoming more and more of a standard procedure in Hollywood," she said. "Spielberg and Lucas deal on all of these films. It's hardly something we invented."

While *The Abyss* is easily the most expensive of all the underwater projects—estimates vary from \$25–\$35 million and higher—Heard claimed that all the money will be visible on screen. She and Cameron brought in Ron Cobb/Cosmo the Barbarian, *Robot Jaws* to produce conceptual sketches and hired underwater photography art Al Goldings (*The Drip*) to work with director of photography Michael Ballhaus. Under the supervision of John Bruno (Hollywood's *The Other Side* and *Lucas* Ball), effects work was done by Industrial Light and Magic (opticals and computer graphics) and DreamQuest. Images (65 minutes—control shot) In addition to the site, a

Continued page 25



John Carl Buechler

The master creature-maker, a veteran of Empire films, is always looking to create bigger and better monsters

By Dennis Fischer

FILMS INCLUDE

Dr. Heide & Mr. Hyde (1989) make-up FX
GoldenEye (1995) creature FX
The Prow (1998) make-up FX
The Incredible Shrinking Woman (1981) FX assistant
Android (1982) android FX
Maniacs (1980) make-up FX
Transformations
Deathstalker (1982) FX and second unit director
Trancers (1984) make-up FX
Dungeons & Dragons (1983) director, segment about evil FX
Chiswick (1985) created FX
No-Announcer (1988) make-up FX
Terror Vision (1984) created FX
Conspiracy (1984) make-up FX
The Dolls (1985) make-up FX
Emmanuelle (1984) creature design make-up FX
From Beyond (1986) creature design, transformation director
Troll (1986) make-up FX
Zone Troopers (1986) created FX
Collar Thriller (1988) director make-up FX
Blackwolves IV (1988) additional FX
Nightmare on Elm Street, Part IV (1988) created FX
Prison (1988) make-up FX
Arms (1988) creature design
Friday the 13th, Part VII (1989) director make-up FX
Ghost Town (1989) make-up FX
Chiswick II (1988) second unit director make-up FX
Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade (1989) creature FX
The Laughing Dead (1988) make-up FX
Robot Joe (1988) make-up FX
To Die For (1989) make-up FX

An Anecdote



John Buechler with one of his creations.

Only one effects person has worked on films starring the three most popular figures in modern horror cinema: Freddy Krueger, Jason Voorhees and Michael Myers. John Carl Buechler, one of the busiest make-up men in Hollywood, started the trend of make-up men becoming directors by directing a segment of *The Dungeons & Dragons* and all of *Troll* (subsequently Stan Winston, Clive Wilton and Tom Burman have all made the transition). The latest entry in Buechler's varied resume is the soon to be released production of *The Laughing Dead*, a horror/fantasy about an ancient Mayan death god come to life.

Buechler had a banner year in 1988 by both directing and doing the makeup for *Friday the 13th—Part VII* as well as handling additional make-up chores on *MacGyver 4* and *Nightmare on Elm Street IV: The Laughing Dead*, the latest project he's landing his monster-crafting talents in, is the bonafide of water-drinker Sonow Sacharthal Sacharthal, who also writes horror novels under the name of S.P. Sonow. writes lively and colorful science fiction and fantasy novels, and is especially renowned for his book *Vampire Junction*, which featured a rock-

man/vampire before Anne Rice used the same device for *The Vampire Lestat*.

Buechler's most successful film to date was the seventh installment of the continually popular *Friday the 13th* series, and he's proud of the distinction he provided the movie. "It's the one where we got Jason unmasked for more than half a second. We did a full frontal Jason on movie—we see him

"Horror is pretty much like telling a joke—it's a build-up and a punch line."

from head-to-toe as presented as we could get him. We also threw in a pretty large element of fantasy," continued Buechler, "and introduced a character who could kick his ass, and who sort of did."

Buechler took on the Part VII assignment just as he was finishing building the make-up effects for *Arms*, one of the last projects Empire filmed before going bankrupt. For the movie, Buechler and his crew had to come up with a total of 185 different lifetimes. The film is finally expected to be released



In *Arms Inferno*, one of the last films made by Romero, John created 107 different life forms

through Lewis Yablum, who has taken over what used to be Empire, now called Epic. Peppering all his while, another film in production was nothing new to Buechler, however, who never seems to be involved in less than half a dozen projects per year.

"There were a number of things that I was very happy about with the picture [Part VII], and Buechler. I got to put in something entirely new for a *Friday the 13th* movie—that is an entire subplot around one character who ultimately became the hero. We were writing the script every night before we shot it—that is the fastest movie ever made. There were six weeks of principal photography, and we did all live action and special effects simultaneously, shooting with one unit and an additional camera.

Though he has done them, Buechler is not a big fan of slasher films. When he first learned of his opportunity to do a *Friday the 13th* film, he considered how he might get away from the rigid formula established by the previous films. "When I first became involved, I was very pleased because I got the hint that I might be able to move it closer to a new direction. I desperately wanted to create some kind of back story on Jason, something that demonstrated his dark origins—why is he this unstopable thing?"

"After having done 120 special make-up effects films both as an actor and an effects artist, one learns what the MPAA will take and what they will not take. My first sense of the picture was to go for more of the surrealistic horror approach as opposed to a graphic, visceral blood-and-guts approach, which I feared would be removed. Censorship is always a problem on these pictures and one doesn't

want to do one of these things unless you can really justify it.

"It was, however, decided through various meetings to go more for the traditional stalk-and-slash. So I ended up not to do everything I could to make that work. In fact, we did it. If I was going to do one of these things, I was going to do it in a *Rocky Horror* style and go for looks, hopefully going to the point where it's so grotesque that it would become funny—as opposed to downright serious, stark reality.

Though he has done them, Buechler is not a big fan of slasher films.

"That didn't work because the ratings board would not allow anything to be on screen, so subsequently this is the most bloodless *Friday the 13th* ever seen. Horror aspects much like telling a good joke—it's a build up and a punch

line. My punch lines were all removed by the MPAA."

After principal photography was over, it was a rush job to get 1700 prints in the theaters with a rating, a soundtrack, and a mix in only six weeks. Read Buechler, "It was a very fast-made film, but there's a lot of things in it that I'm very proud of. I love the performance of Dr. Coonan (Jerry Koser) and Tina (Lar Park Lincoln), and I think Kane Hodder has become the definitive Jason. He's even one of a very powerful, dark force for these pictures.

"I'm satisfied creatively that I've been able to put my touch on the *Friday* series with a Jason to be reckoned with. I very much like the design which we ultimately created for him. I love the final battle between Jason and Tina. I'm not extraordinarily happy about the ending, it was changed from the original version.

"You see that mask over there—the mechanical (head) that's apelin but has teeth and flesh changing to it? That was what [Tina] did and was going to look like when he came up to grab Jason, and it was going to be very profound. Again, it was decided that that was too monstrous for the picture, so fantasy oriented, so we came up with something a little bit better in our climax of the film where we just see dad coming up from nowhere. Ultimately I wanted this ghostly vision to come up, grab Jason, and pull him under the water. What we ultimately ended up with was the actor who played Dad coming up and grabbing Jason. He'd been under the water now for ten years and he looked exactly the same. I didn't quite understand it and I guess the philosophy was that he was a ghost. I don't know."

However, as popular as the Jason character is with horror audiences, Buechler finds his popularity has been



replaced by that of Freddy Krueger. He explained, "That's part of the reason I wanted to push Jesse in a new direction, to make him more interesting. Now Freddy is representing Hideo's subconscious intellectually for me; something that a lumbering bulk in a hockey mask can't do. His acid personality matches the scenarios in which many or less persons are the younger members of the audience. He's a stand-up horror comedian, and anything lined with the appropriate humor works. I also think that slashers just don't cut it in the way that something more imaginative does. If you create a surrealistic element as we did in *Nightmare 4*—the horror genre, the Freddy hole, the chest of nails—you immediately come into contact with an audience who appreciates a new emotional state and you're not obligated to cut elements of your work because the Ratings Board finds it offensive. If you create what is obviously a non-duplicatable event—something that in pure business you've taken a quite a bit of the curse off, which is pretty much what I wanted to do with *Freddy*."

Bushler then worked on *To Die For* as an offbeat vampire film before moving on to *McHale's* 4. In the most recent *McHale's* installment, his FX group was responsible for several spiced-up scenes that were added after the picture was already shot to add a little punch to the film.

The first addition involved Michael Myers' murder of an ambulance attendant. "He [Myers] takes his knife and pushes it into the guy's forehead, puncturing through the skull and into the brain, which was a big shock. That was created by a mechanical hand which was articulated so that it looks alive, but the thumb was collapsible almost like a collapsible knife. It went down past the first joint and at the same time spread out blood and gave the illusion that it was poking through his head."

Another effect involved Michael's attack on a character named Earl, who is driving a truck with the crane loader in the back. In the original cut of the film, Michael reached his hand inside [the driver's compartment] and you didn't see what happened. The truck just went off the road and crashed. We created an articulated version of Earl from the legs up that had a spring release mechanism in the neck, which allowed the neck to separate and open and spew viscera. So when George Wilbur, the spokesman who played Michael, reached in and grabbed his fingers could go into a pre-arranged opening and tear it apart and blood would go all over the place."



Following *McHale's* 4, Bushler's group created an artificial rhino head for the final shot of *Indiana Jones and the Lost Crusade* before going on to *The Longtime Dead*. "I met Samwise some years ago and we have been friends for a while," Bushler said.

"We've always wanted to do a project together. In fact, we have a project together called *Inner Man*, which is a wonderful motion picture he wrote that ultimately we hope to do, but in terms of budget it would make *Baron Munchausen* look like a cheaper. It would be a very expensive undertaking. But we've always wanted to work

good being *Quetzalcoatl*, the Serpent God and the Death God who is a skull like, Giger-esque yet Mayan thing. The two manifestations have a lot to which fortifies the climax of the film."

Despite being made on a minuscule budget, the film is fairly ambitious and as a screenwriter has already demonstrated, Bushler skilful in a rather unique and original talent. The film is written to become something of a cult item simply based on the fact that many of the performers in the film are themselves horror movie fans who are friends of Bushler's.

"I think Samwise has a very exaggerated sense of the absurd," commented Bushler. "*The Longtime Dead* is a perfect title for it because in many ways it is a dark comedy. It's not like any movie that you've seen before. There are many elements that you will recognize as being standards in other movies, which are then skewed. It's fairly bold in its approach to the genre. It has things that you wouldn't normally expect."

Bushler is currently involved with a number of projects he is prepared to talk in an about later, including *Obsession: Go to College* (which he is both directing and costarring FX for), the remake of *Phantom of the Opera* starring Robert Englund, currently filming in Europe and something which he promises will be the definitive werewolf film of all time tentatively titled *Beasts of the Moon*, which he is also directing.

Meanwhile, for those horror fans who like their films take their horror—be it mild, be it on the lookout for *The Longtime Dead*.

In *Halloween 4*, his unit was responsible for many spiced-up scenes.

together and the situation presented itself when Samwise was going to make a movie. He was coming to us for advice on a lot of different things, and I agreed to help him out on certain aspects that would mutually benefit us both."

In a nutshell, *The Longtime Dead* involves a Catholic priest who has lost his faith and has fathered a child with a nun some years before. He crosses paths with a Mayan priest who's trying to resurrect the Death God and start a new Mayan cult in the Americas. Ultimately Father O Sullivan almost becomes the resurrection of the Death God.

Magnific Media Industries was charged with the task of creating the manifestations of good and evil, the

THE ABYSS

1000

immense amount of time and money went into upgrading the film's underwater technology: special lighting elements, experimental diving helmets designed on the actor's face would not be discarded, a complex com. restrictions and video system (Cameron wanted to be able to talk with his actors and see video playback to check his work) functional submersibles and ROVs remotely operated on location, diving equipment and a public address system so that his submersible crew under water and those on the ship's diving platform could hear his instructions.

Hard credits optical-effects specialist Ben Fourn for steering them in the direction of a suitable filming site for *The Abyss*. When Fourn was being interviewed to work on the show he would later opt to join the effects staff of Star Trek. Vito told them of a facility he had heard about somewhere in the Southeast that had a large, concrete containment vessel. Hard and Cameron tracked it down and flew out.

"The crew is trapped in the abyss, and it's there that a remarkable discovery is made," says Hurd.

South Carolina for a closer look. The site is slated to be the foundation of a planned turbine pit for a never-completed nuclear power station. The smaller of the two spaces, it would eventually become the driving pool tank where the drive shafts appear underwater closed, while the much larger, partially constructed containment building—224 feet in diameter, more than 400 feet in circumference and 55 feet in depth—became the home base of the Borecoyne jet.

As producer, it was Hard's job (after editing Cameron's script and casting the film with him) to hire the production personnel: everyone from the skilled laborers who built the sets to the caterers who brought in food from Atlanta.

What was it like trying to keep everyone happy 24 hours a day? "It was impossible to keep everyone happy," she shot back. "The film was eventually known as *The Abuser*. We decided that if we ever made a sequel it would be called *Son of Abuser*. Here we were in the middle of nowhere, we uprooted people from their families for five months and stuck them there, starting on the hottest month of the year, with

humidity is in the 80 percent range. We had entire crews trying to build sets in these cylindrical vessels that was painted black—do you have any idea how hot it got in there? It was amazing that no one got hurt or passed out from heat prostration.

"We had actors in headings without air conditioning—the air conditioning in my office didn't even work all the time. You wouldn't believe how much liquid people went through—the more you went outside you started sweating. Then there was the wonderful Southeast red dirt—everything ended up getting covered in red, including the wardrobe."

Assorted disasters made Haid's life even more hectic. On the first day of shooting the harper of the two tanks—which held 7.5 million gallons of water—developed a leak. "It leaked 100,000 gallons an hour," she related, her face contorting in recall of the moment. "How do you fix something like that? We hired people who fix dams and they came in so we wouldn't have to drain it. Then we had pipes bursting all the time—and always on the week end. The water, which went through a complicated purification process, would get too cloudy to shoot in. There was every problem you could imagine—from trying to get set construction labor in a place where movie folk had never been shot to eating lunch in the blazing sun while trying to keep the film dry. One of the cast had to wear a phone all day, just in case we needed to go in a cover set. They couldn't do anything, they couldn't leave a life. It was like being surrounded for five years by it."

Obviously, *The Abyss* could not have been made had Cameron not been the passionate and experienced underwater adventurer that he is. Hard heartily convinced "I'm wouldn't have conceived it in that way if he hadn't had that kind of background and expertise. But he spent more time under water than anyone. When he got a cold he'd have to dive with it, which caused no credible minor problems for him. That didn't deter him, though. He didn't lose one day of shooting due to illness. I'm sure when he got up in the morning he didn't necessarily look forward to spending 14 hours in a diving suit, but he did it, anyway."

Now that the film is finished, Hurd is breathing easier. She's not the type of producer to slow down once a film has wrapped—in fact, she has three other projects in development at this writing. Her aspirations for *The Abyss* were summed up in her final statement: "With this movie, one hopes for Academy Award nominations, not just good box-office."

BATHBONE

© 2004 Blackwell Publishing Ltd, *Journal of Internal Medicine* 255: 111–118

Real Killybane's career achievement in film villainy has few equals, certainly none in terms of variety and elegance. One keeps wondering what he might have been able to accomplish in other roles—the real Richard III, the Phantom, Usher, as mentioned above, or as Scaramouche, the Count of Monte Cristo or even Henry Higgins. But he did give us a Sherlock Holmes which, despite many recent excellent portrayals, remains definitive and many memorable film moments as well. One must pay him the ultimate artist's compliment—by making every film better simply by being in it.

1000

[illegible]

ELM STREET

Continued from page 10

learned to love and loathe. "Hounded at least originally," on the *Vampire From House of Wax* turn make-up, and where it takes Kevin about three hours to get it stuck on, I've got it down to just under 90 minutes," Miller related at length. "They need the time on these things, because they make them up as they go along. I pretty much know what effects *Elm Street* is made, though—my problem was I wanted to get back to the scene and follow Fred's place, where on the Freddy after the final I'll start to look more and more like Robert (England). Robert doesn't have a scary face, he has a kind face. So for this one he has aged, for one thing, and we gave him a more sinister brow along with a small, old, old-age nose that drops, more wrinkles, and deep, dark eyes."

Once concerned about being type-cast as a "sissy guy" in *V*, England now finds himself flip-flopped as a creature of our dark minds, from the entire *Elm Street* cast to the new lead in the new *Phantom of the Opera* to the director of the horror film *1000 Fists*.

"Obviously I have to deal with it," England commented. "You don't just abruptly throw the brakes on what

kill Freddy in this movie—he'll just come back, anyway."

The central effect of the film was finished with the work of all of the film financing units attached to this \$3.5 million production. It features a grotesque embryo—skin covered, worm like, midget-infested—which is the scene for a rebirth of our man Krueger (a nightmare perhaps) who pops out after referring into his usual mass of scortious, clutching, "IT'S A BOY!"

These hair-raising scenes are the crowd pleasers, the moments where, like Freddy's jokes, are spared and designed to fit into Hopkins' view of what should go into an *Elm Street* sequel. "The first [nightmare] movie scared the shit out of me, but it had a lot of gore in it and I'm not much into gore. For me, you get much more terror out of impending gore rather than the gore itself—and in this movie the gore is really out there, really wild, and you manage to laugh at Gross, but I know," he concludes.

England has the last word on the film: Hopkins has some incredibly structured, game-camera topography going on in this sequel. I wanted to steal the storyboards for my office. A combination of something like *Marvin Arons* and *E.C. Comics*, *Elm Street* is totally not linear. Even with the introduction of normal scenes, there are little stroke cuts and crazy points of view and angles to throw you off balance. It's pretty remarkable."

There's no doubt that in this era of Hollywood sequels, such creativity should be fostered and encouraged. □

MARTIANS!!!

Continued from page 10

but these guys haven't."

The prime mover of *Martians* is director/writer Patrick Johnson, who has worked in commercials and feature films, on both writing and special effects. On the effects end, he has contributed to such projects as *2001*, *Solaris*, and *V*. He made his debut as a second unit director doing the *Becker* Shopwore in the same-day film *Dead Heat*.

One thing that Johnson does want to make clear about the film is that it is not a parody or a space-opera satire. "It's more like it's a *Wonderful Life* meets *The Russians Are Coming* meets *E.T.* We're not trying to be like *E.T.*, but there's a certain amount of friendship and alien in our film. But the idea is, it's got a meaningful story behind the comedy—the story of this old man whose love is being lost—and it's not just a kids' film. I don't believe

a kids' film should be just a bunch of silly jokes with no slight-edge to them. This is more of a *Growing Pains* style comedy that kids can watch. Every time you're about to get into something that's playing or sweet or just normal comedy, it just suddenly veers slightly to the left. There's a little spin or twist in everything. Every time there's a tender moment, when you're just about to pull out the handkerchief, something a little wacky happens, so it never really dips down to too sweet a level."

No doubt there will be a good many heads turning in the audience as well when *Martians*'s women of this spring and summer who, many talented individuals can do when working together with the right attitude—even under adverse conditions. □

HORRORFAN BACK ISSUES

To order a back issue, please send \$5.00 (includes postage and handling) to: **HORRORFAN, GCH Publishing**, 8888 Seventh Avenue, N.Y. NY 10016. Allow four weeks for delivery. Make checks payable to: **GCH Publishing**.

FANEX 3

Sept. 9 & 10, 1989

Come to the Horror and Fantasy Film EXPO!

Baltimore, MD, The Towson Shorron

Guests include: Jeff Morrow, star of *The Island Earth* and *Knight*, Forrest J. Ackerman, and Fred Olen Ray, director of *Mollywood Christmas* *Horror*.

Also, Special screenings, celebrity autographs and plenty of movie memorabilia.

MEMBERSHIP: F.O. \$4.00 (includes 1989 *FANEX* Magazine) \$20.00 (1989 and 4 extra *FANEX* Magazines) \$30.00 (1989 and 6 extra *FANEX* Magazines) Children under 12 \$10.00 per day. Special deals are \$10.00 (Saturn), \$15.00 (Ford) and \$20.00 (Ford) for each special event. (Call 800-555-5555 for more info.)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To Jeff Sherman, Ted Schuch, Gary Savette and Bill George—thank you for the use of your valuable skills.

Photo credits: Shooter: Peter Levine, Horner: Steve Michael Becker; Martians: Gary Pan; The Immortal: Joe Joe; The Abyss: Richard Foreman; Life Magazine: Sam Emerson, Rightwood: Murray Close

**NEXT ISSUE OF
HORRORFAN
ON SALE OCT. 11**

THE GORE STORE

For creatures that walk the night



#SD 142
Werewolf Wailer
\$18.00



#SD 24 Hockey Mask
\$8.00



#SD 302 Evil Unicorn
\$37.00



#SD 254 Zombie
\$48.00



#SD 13
Killer Neck piece
\$15.00



#SD 10 Killer Face Mask
\$21.00



#SD 143 Multi Piece
\$18.00



#SD 104 Cut Off Head
\$44.00



#SD 266
Gore May
\$40.00



#SD 28 Horror Sweater
\$33.00



STAGE DOOR COSTUMES & MAKEUP

Please indicate how many of each item ordered and add \$3.50 per item to cover postage and handling. (Foreign \$10.00) (Canadian \$7.00)

- #SD 101 Mask \$18.00
- #SD 102 Face \$18.00
- #SD 103 Hat \$18.00
- #SD 104 Socks \$18.00
- #SD 105 Shoes \$18.00
- #SD 106 Ears \$18.00

- #SD 107 Eye Mask \$21.00
- #SD 108 Nose Mask \$21.00
- #SD 109 Mouth Mask \$21.00
- #SD 110 Ears Mask \$21.00
- #SD 111 Scarf Mask \$21.00
- #SD 112 Scarf Mask \$21.00

#SD 113 in Stock \$18.00 (on hand)

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

Send check or money order to:

STAGE DOOR COSTUMES & MAKEUP
1304 South St.
Daytona Beach, FL 32118
(407) 754-0444

You see them. You know they're there.
You think they're invisible.
You're wrong. Live it again.

JOHN CARPENTERS

THEY LIVE

JOHN CARPENTERS PRESENTS "THEY LIVE" CASTING BY JAMES CAMPBELL COSTUME DESIGNER JAMES CAMPBELL MUSIC BY JAMES CAMPBELL EDITOR JAMES CAMPBELL PRODUCTION DESIGNER JAMES CAMPBELL EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS JAMES CAMPBELL PRODUCED BY JAMES CAMPBELL WRITTEN BY JAMES CAMPBELL DIRECTED BY JAMES CAMPBELL

STEREO

ON VIDEOCASSETTE

MCA
HOME ENTERTAINMENT